

**Political Communication in a
Multicultural New Zealand:**

Ethnic Minority Media and the 2008 Election

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of the requirements for the Degree of
Master of Arts in Mass Communication

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Executive Summary

New Zealand's 2008 general election, with its unprecedented focus on the "ethnic vote" and ethnic minority candidates with highest-ever party list rankings, proved compelling from a migrant engagement perspective. How *do* migrant communities achieve voice in their adopted country? And how does a now unmistakably multicultural nation address the political communication needs of an increasingly vocal, pro-active, and politically involved migrant population?

This thesis examines the role of ethnic minority media in engaging migrant communities in the democratic process. In particular, it examines South Asian media in New Zealand and the extent to which they represented a vital public sphere for informing and engaging their wider migrant communities in public political debate during the 2008 election campaign.

Applying qualitative and quantitative research approaches, this thesis elicits and analyses diverse perspectives of the extent to which local South Asian newspapers and radio current affairs programming represented an important complementary public sphere for informing and engaging migrant voters during the campaign.

Ultimately, this study provides an alternative perspective on media coverage of the 2008 New Zealand general election, and insight into the role and influence of ethnic minority media within democratic discourse. As a contribution to the body of academic literature examining the media and minority political engagement, it is intended to provoke critical consideration of the communications needs facing new migrants in an increasingly multicultural New Zealand.

Chapter One: Introduction

Ethnic Minorities, the Media, and the Democratic Process

Contemporary political communication theory, shaped by the undeniably influential role of the media in the democratic process, persistently challenges the relationship between politics and the media. Invariably, ‘the media,’ when referred to in the context of politics and democracy, implies mainstream mass media and the dissemination of an increasingly homogenised information stream. Global media deregulation towards the end of the twentieth century has created an intensely competitive, commodified mass media market dominated by conglomerates targeting an unmistakably ‘mainstream’ audience.

Significantly less prominent has been discussion on the role of non-mainstream media in political communication and the democratic process. Indeed, the mere existence of alternative forms of media, representing an extensive cross-section of cultural, social, gender, and religious interests, only in recent years has attracted academic attention as a specialist field of theoretical research. The result is an expanding body of literature examining independent or alternative media dedicated to, among other sectors, indigenous and ethnic minority interests. However, much of the international literature focuses on the *viability* and *sustainability* of such media, and on the significance of their role in the preservation of indigenous and minority languages, cultures and traditions.

Largely under-researched, particularly within a New Zealand context, is the role of ethnic minority media in creating opportunities for democratic discourse. Do ethnic minority media represent a vital ‘public space’ for new migrants to engage as citizens of their adopted country by facilitating greater participation in public political debate? Or do they encourage migrant communities to conduct independent political debate within their own media? And how does the perceived non-representation of minority voices by the mainstream media affect the engagement of migrants as valued new citizens?

In response to an apparent paucity of academic research into the role of ethnic minority media in democratic discourse, this thesis examines the ways and extent to which ethnic minority media engage their migrant communities in wider public political debate. Based on the Habermasian theoretical concept of the media representing a ‘public sphere’ in democratic societies, the thesis explores migrant political participation through ethnic minority media within an analytical framework of multicultural citizenship theory and its assumption of an individual’s right to equal participation in the democratic process, regardless of ethnic, linguistic, cultural or religious differences.

Research parameters were imposed in the case study component of this thesis by focusing on the members and media of one selected migrant community in New Zealand - the South Asian community. Its focus was further contained by examining an identifiable, defined timeframe for public political engagement as New Zealand citizens – the election campaign. The case study accordingly examined local South Asian media coverage of the New Zealand general election of 2008, and South Asian migrants’ level of participation in, and perceptions of, public political debate during the 2008 election campaign.

In order to evaluate the role and significance of South Asian media within a New Zealand democratic context, it is important to outline distinct ethnic and cultural changes in New Zealand society since the early 1990s.

Asian Immigration and the Proliferation of Ethnic Minority Media

Societies have become increasingly multicultural as a result of extensive global migration in recent decades. New Zealand has been equally affected by global migration patterns, with unprecedented levels of immigration in the past two decades. Immigration policy changes under New Zealand's fourth Labour Government in the late 1980s,¹ and significant amendments by subsequent governments,² resulted in dramatic increases in the number of long-term migrants entering New Zealand during the 1990s and into the twenty first century.

The shift in composition of new immigrants has been unmistakable. Prior to immigration policy amendments in 1986, and the resulting 1987 Immigration Act,³ New Zealand's traditional and "'preferred' sort of migrant [had been] white, preferably Western European, [and] most preferably British" (Bartley, citing Ongley and Pearson, 1995, in Spoonley, MacPherson and Pearson (eds.), 2004: 157). Provisions in the new Act discarded source country criteria in favour of labour skills contained in an 'Occupational Priority List.' In addition, a 'Business Immigrant Policy' allowed entry to migrants with proven business ability and investment capital (www.stats.govt.nz).

As a result, New Zealand has experienced "a dramatic influx of highly skilled, professional and/or wealthy migrants from Asia, including South Korea, Taiwan, Hong Kong, Singapore, Malaysia, China and India" (Bartley, *ibid*: 158). According to 2006 census statistics released in April 2007, the number of residents identifying within the broadly-defined category of 'Asian' rose from 99,759 to 354,552 between 1991 and 2006, up 355%

¹ Explore Te Ara: The Encyclopedia of New Zealand, *1986–2003: selection on personal merit: 1986–87: a review and a new act* [online]
<http://www.teara.govt.nz/NewZealanders/NewZealandPeoples/ImmigrationRegulation/5/en>

² *ibid.*, *Immigration Amendment Act 1991; 1995 Adjustments; Changes in 2002 and 2003*

³ *Immigration Policies 1*, from www.stats.govt.nz/analytical-reports/tourism-migration-2000

in just 15 years.⁴ Statistics New Zealand projections indicate that, by the year 2021, the resident Asian population will reach nearly 15% of the total New Zealand population.⁵

While 1990s Asian immigrant statistics tended to be dominated by migrants of East Asian origin, more recent census data reveal significant increases in the number of migrants from South Asia, incorporating the geographically linked, if not culturally comparable, countries of India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Nepal and Sri Lanka. Indeed, the extended South Asian community represents the fastest-growing ethnic group in New Zealand (www.stats.govt.nz). Between 2001 and 2006, the number of permanent residents identifying within the broadly-defined category of 'South Asian' rose from 70,000 to 115,000, an increase of 164 percent within five years.⁶ This figure represents nearly three percent of the total New Zealand population (*ibid.*).

Demographic shifts reflected in the census data presented have created complex social and political challenges in New Zealand since the early 1990s. Not only has the composition of migrants changed in this country, but the nature of migration appears to have shifted also. Considerable academic attention has been dedicated in recent years to changing conceptions of migration, citizenship and national identity, with forums held in New Zealand at the end of the 1990s and early 2000s focusing on a need to rethink and redefine citizenship theory, particularly as it applies in this country.⁷ Multicultural citizenship ideals, together with the more recent phenomena of temporary migration and transnational citizenship, are replacing traditional assumptions about permanent settlement and migrant adoption of host country practices. No longer do migrant communities intentionally, nor are they expected to, "shed their distinctive heritage and assimilate entirely to existing cultural norms" (Kymlicka, 1995: 14).

⁴ Statistics New Zealand, *Quickstats about Culture and Identity* from www.stats.govt.nz

⁵ Statistics New Zealand, *National Ethnic Population Projections, 2001(base) – 2021* from <http://www.stats.govt.nz/additional-information/projections-overview.htm#natethas>

⁶ Comprises the official census categories of: Indian nfd; Indian nec; Sri Lankan nfd; Indo-Fijian; Bangladeshi, and Pakistani. Does not include sub-categories of Tamil, Punjabi, Gujarati, or Sikh, assuming respondents marking these categories have possibly also marked a broader ethnic category, given the allowance to select up to three categories. The 2006 total includes the category of Nepalese, while available 2001 census data does not specify Nepalese as a category.

⁷ *Revisioning and Reclaiming Citizenship Colloquium*, University of Waikato, November 1998; *Revisioning Citizenship For The 21st Century Conference*, University of Waikato, February 2000.

The past decade, as a consequence, has seen the proliferation of numerous and wide-ranging Asian cultural landmarks, particularly in Auckland - home to by far the greatest concentration of Asian migrants in New Zealand.⁸ The Office of Ethnic Affairs recognises the inherent need for new and long-term migrants to establish means of cultural expression in their adopted land,⁹ with places of religious worship, cultural centres and ethnic food outlets in some instances transforming entire suburbs (Friesen et al., 2005: 385-6). Perhaps less obvious, but by no means less significant, is a need to establish ethnic-specific forms of media, particularly in a migrant community's own language(s) or dialects.

Ethnic minority media have emerged in response to the communications needs of expanding migrant communities in increasingly ethnically, culturally, and linguistically diverse nations. They provide valuable opportunities for new migrants, particularly those lacking an adequate knowledge of the adopted country's language, to absorb national and international news and current affairs, and access information on local health, well-being, settlement and legal services, places of worship and specific cultural events. They also enable migrant communities to preserve native languages and cultures, providing audiences with opportunities to listen to traditional music, culture-specific discussions, and homeland news not otherwise broadcast on mainstream media.

In New Zealand, a diverse array of ethnic minority media have emerged in addition to the more established medium of migrant-specific communication – that of community access radio. Produced by, for, and about minority interest groups, community access radio has long been an accessible form of media for the growing numbers of migrants opting to settle in New Zealand.¹⁰ In 2007, Planet FM community access radio in Auckland, for example, featured programming in 51 languages.¹¹ However, the past decade has seen the proliferation of numerous forms of independent ethnic media, with, for example, Chinese-, Korean-, and Indian-language newspapers complementing minority-language television and ethnic-specific commercial radio.

⁸ Statistics New Zealand, 2006 Census data by region, from www.stats.govt.nz

⁹ Office of Ethnic Affairs, *Ethnic Perspectives in Policy*, 2004: 16

¹⁰ Association of Community Access Broadcasters, www.acab.org.nz

¹¹ Planet FM, Auckland, www.104.6planetfm.org.nz/

Significantly, one of the fastest-growing of these ‘media phenomena’ in New Zealand has emerged within the South Asian community. Auckland-based Hindi-language radio station, Radio Tarana 1386 AM, for example, registered nearly 5% audience share across Auckland’s entire commercial radio market in May 2009, representing over 66,000 listeners and rating in ninth place ahead of several of Auckland’s established commercial radio stations.¹² In terms of print media, a selection of newspapers catering to the cultural and linguistic needs of the wider South Asian community is currently available in Hindi, Punjabi and English.¹³ But to what extent do the now-established and visible South Asian media represent a ‘public sphere’ through which South Asian migrant communities can participate in wider political debate as new citizens and permanent residents of this country?

Political Communication through South Asian Media in New Zealand

This thesis examines the ways and extent to which New Zealand’s South Asian media engage their migrant communities in wider public political debate as ‘new New Zealanders’. Its aim is to provide insight into the level of political engagement experienced by one particular sector of New Zealand’s migrant population. In assessing the extent of this engagement, one specific, identifiable aspect of public participation has been selected as an indicator – the election campaign. The seven-week New Zealand general election campaign of 2008 thus provided clearly-defined parameters for the case study component of this thesis.

For the purposes of this research, ‘South Asian’ refers to migrants from India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Nepal, and Sri Lanka. Also included in this definition, solely for the purposes of this research, it should be emphasised, are Indo-Fijian migrants, as this group is identified within the target audience of the South Asian media analysed in this thesis.¹⁴ The category of migrants interviewed in the course of this research is defined as those having

¹² *Indian Newslink*, <http://www.indiannewslink.co.nz/index.php/homelink/3180.html>

¹³ Asia New Zealand Foundation media newsletter, May 2005, from <http://www.scoop.co.nz/stories/BU0505/S00285.htm>

¹⁴ Refer, for example, *Indian Newslink* www.indiannewslink.co.nz

immigrated to New Zealand since 2001.¹⁵ This date was selected to restrict the research focus to more recent South Asian migrants, as this is where issues of engagement and settlement tend to be more common,¹⁶ and utilised the 2001 census as a cut-off point.

To obtain a cross-section of election participation data, a range of focus group participants was selected, with some very recent migrants experiencing New Zealand voting for the first time during the 2008 election, while others had voted in one or more previous elections. (As discussed in Chapter Five however, the selection of focus group participants rested ultimately within the hands of each Auckland-based liaison person and in certain cases, individual participants' length of time in New Zealand sat outside the imposed research parameters. To provide a wider migrant perspective, the resulting data were incorporated into the case study and resulting analysis.)

The decision to focus on South Asian media specifically was prompted by two key contributing factors: (1) the significant increase in the number of South Asian migrants in New Zealand, as highlighted, representing a rapidly growing number of voices and voters, and (2) recognition of the existence of a growing body of academic literature on Chinese-language media in New Zealand,¹⁷ while South Asian/Indian media appeared not to have been examined to the same extent. Moreover, personal involvement with the Office of Ethnic Affairs' newly-established ethnic media advisory group in Christchurch¹⁸ at the time suggested that research into this area of migrant communication was both timely and of particular interest to migrant communities.

¹⁵ As highlighted in the case study in Chapter Five, the inclusion in the focus groups of migrants who had resided in New Zealand longer than this selected timeframe was ultimately determined by the liaison person approached, and thus beyond the control of the researcher, despite suggested parameters being provided to the liaison person on initial contact.

¹⁶ *Engaging Asian Communities in New Zealand*, Asian Communities Report for the Asia New Zealand Foundation (2005) page 6

¹⁷ Refer, for example, Steven Young www.stevenyoung.co.nz; Yang, Lin. *The emergence of Chinese-language media in New Zealand*. <http://www.posc.canterbury.ac.nz/coms/postgrad/>; Beal, T. (2002) "Out of the Shadows: Emerging Political and Civil Participation of the Chinese in New Zealand," paper delivered to the Asia Pacific Public Affairs Forum, Kaohsiung, 17-18 July 2002 School of Marketing and International Business, Victoria University of Wellington [online] http://www.google.co.nz/search?hl=en&q=immigration+and+the+1996+election&meta=cr%3DcountryNZ&rlz=1W1GPEA_en

¹⁸ Established by *The Press*, Christchurch in March 2007, in association with the Christchurch Office of Ethnic Affairs, following community concern over a lack of balance in an article reporting incidences of cheating by Chinese students at Lincoln University - *from Draft Media Section for the Annual Race Relations Report*, Human Rights Commission, January 2008.

Chapter Outlines

This thesis, constructed on the Habermasian theoretical concept of the media as a public sphere which “can help citizens learn about the world, debate their responses to it and reach informed decisions about what courses of action to adopt” (Dahlgren, in Dahlgren and Sparks (eds.), 1991:1), assesses the extent to which new migrants, as citizens and permanent residents of their adopted countries, are engaged in public political debate by their own, locally-based, migrant-specific media.

Chapter Two begins this analysis within the context of citizenship theory, by examining citizenship challenges facing new migrants and, as applicable, South Asian migrants in New Zealand. It presents recent theoretical debate on changing conceptions of citizenship and the need to rethink citizenship theory in response to unprecedented levels of global migration in the past two decades. Specifically, it discusses the notion of ‘multicultural’ citizenship, with theories advanced by Kymlicka, Parekh, and Heywood providing redefined parameters for traditional conceptions of citizenship and their assumptions of migrant assimilation, commitment to permanent residence, and the renouncement of cultural, religious and linguistic traditions. These arguments provide an analytical framework for discussion on post-1987 migration to New Zealand and the challenges to have ensued from arguably ‘flawed’ immigration policy (Trlin and Watts, in Spoonley, MacPherson, and Pearson (eds.), 2004:111-134).

Demographic shifts reflected in the census data presented have created complex social and political challenges in New Zealand since the early 1990s. Trlin and Watts examine the effects of radical changes to immigration policy and the subsequent ‘politicisation’ of immigration during this period, declaring immigration policy and immigrant settlement “a flawed relationship at the turn of the millennium” (ibid: 111). The impact of these on (particularly) Asian migrants and their capacity to participate fully as citizens of their adopted country is examined within the contextual framework of multicultural citizenship theory, as discussed.

Equally as significant is the challenge to new migrants of absorbing and acknowledging the strongly bicultural context into which they arrive and settle in their adopted country of New Zealand. The concept of emerging multiculturalism within a bicultural context is examined by selected New Zealand political scientists, and illustrates the complexity of a rapid rise in immigration during the 1990s coinciding with increased prominence and public awareness of indigenous rights and 'Treaty' politics in this country in the 1990s.

The thesis then focuses on the South Asian migrant community specifically, with explanatory comment from Friesen et al. highlighting cultural, linguistic and religious aspects differentiating this community from the broadly defined 'Asian' migrant community arguably misrepresented in the mainstream media. Also highlighted are several South Asian-specific events and forums nationwide, representing heightened interest in 'matters South Asian' as distinguished from the broader category of 'Asian.'

Chapter Three explores the Habermasian theoretical concept of the media as a public sphere, to provide a context for the proliferation of ethnic minority media, both internationally and in New Zealand. Discussion on the media as a public sphere, and its central role in the distribution of information to enable citizens to make informed choices, incorporates critiques of Habermas' theory by Dahlgren, Curran, and Fraser. Each offers a revised interpretation of Habermasian theory in response to perceived inadequacies in his traditional conceptions of a bourgeois public sphere, arguably no longer applicable in contemporary society. Of most significance in the revised interpretations of Habermasian public sphere theory is the concept of *plurality of public spheres*, which provides the core analytical framework for this thesis.

Looking to the New Zealand context and the role of the mainstream media as a public sphere, Chapter Three examines the democratic responsibility of the mainstream media and questions the way migrant communities absorb political information and convey community-specific needs and aspirations to politicians, local body representatives and

policymakers in New Zealand. How is the dialogue about becoming an active participant in economic, social, civic, cultural and spiritual affairs conducted?

The proliferation and importance of ethnic minority media are explained as a response to the perceived under-representation of minority interests, voices, and aspirations in an increasingly homogenised mass media. Drawing on comment from Husband and Riggins, Chapter Three highlights the advantages and limitations of ethnic minority media, and presents a New Zealand perspective, with Spoonley, Trlin, and MacPherson providing a contextual explanation for the establishment of migrant-specific media in this country. Academic comment and recent examples of New Zealand's ethnic minority media and their role in the democratic process lead into discussion on dilemmas arguably inherent in the development and maintenance of ethnic minority media.

Riggins, in his introduction to *Ethnic Minority Media: An International Perspective*, presents Subervi-Velez's 1986 'dual role' theory on the role of ethnic minority media, which highlights ambiguity over 'cultural preservation' versus an 'assimilationist' function (Riggins, 1992: 4). Riggins explores this theory and outlines ways ethnic minority media may both induce, and counter, migrant assimilation into the dominant culture. He examines ethnic minority media within the broader context of ethnic minority survival in the age of mass communication, arguing the successful development of ethnic minority media is attainable, provided "the political context is not overwhelmingly hostile" (ibid: 287). Husband, meanwhile, focuses on diversity in the media as one of the defining elements in the construction of a viable, multi-ethnic public sphere.

Chapter Three concludes with a specific focus on the political engagement of South Asian communities through ethnic minority media in New Zealand, with particular reference to: a conference on Asian electoral participation; an Asian perspective on the 2008 election; and an Asia New Zealand Foundation report on engaging Asian communities in New Zealand.

Chapter Four explains three forms of methodology applied in the primary research component of this thesis. Drawing on Tolich and Davidson's guide to research options, the

three forms of methodology, selected from eighteen presented, were: (1) focus groups; (2) key informant interviews; and content analysis (Tolich and Davidson, in Davidson and Tolich (eds.), 2003: 129-134). The methodological concept of ‘triangulation’ (Neuman, 1997: 151) was applied, examining the same variable by eliciting qualitative and quantitative research data from three different sources: from media consumers via focus groups; directly from media managers and editors; and through analysis of political and election-focused content of selected South Asian media during the 2008 election campaign.

A degree of crossover existed between the quantitative and qualitative research methods used, but as King, Keohane and Verba (1994) suggest, “most research does not fit neatly into one category or the other ... in the same research project some data may be collected that is amenable to statistical analysis, while other equally significant information is not’ (p. 5). Tolich and Davidson similarly highlight the complementary effect of both approaches, arguing, “if there are no compelling methodological grounds to stop you from doing so, why not simply use both?” (Tolich and Davidson, *ibid*: 128).

This thesis utilises King, Keohane and Verba’s research design characteristics as an analytical framework, these stating: (1) the goal is inference; (2) the procedures are public; (3) the conclusions are uncertain; and (4) the content is the method (King, Keohane, and Verba, *ibid*: 7-9). With regard to content analysis, Weber (1990: 4) identifies a number of purposes for this form of analysis. Those applicable to this research project were: (1) to describe attitudinal and behavioural responses to communication; (2) to compare media or ‘levels’ of communication; (3) to reflect cultural patterns of groups, institutions or societies; and (4) to describe trends in communication content.

One of the anticipated challenges of this research methodology was undertaking cross-cultural research as an ‘outsider’ – examining issues facing the South Asian community without an appreciable knowledge of this community’s culture, languages, traditions, or beliefs. Spoonley (2003) examines the issue of cross-cultural research, emphasising the question should be asked at the outset, whether research should even proceed with researchers who are culturally different to those being researched. He explains

many communities will expressly challenge the appropriateness of others to conduct research with them. If it is not deemed appropriate, or the results not deemed valid because of it, the research should not proceed (Spoonley, in Davidson and Tolich, *ibid*: 53).

While this viewpoint could have served as a deterrent to proceeding with the case study, the experience and ensuing data ultimately proved extremely positive and worthwhile. A further research challenge was the language, or languages, with the anticipated need for a Hindi-speaking interpreter to ensure that focus group questions and answers were clear and understood. This, too, proved not insurmountable an obstacle, with interpreters willing to assist in this research.¹⁹ The media monitoring period was determined by the announcement of the 8 November New Zealand general election date, by Prime Minister Helen Clark at a media conference held on Friday 12 September 2008 at Parliament.²⁰ The first post-announcement issue of any of the newspapers to be monitored was published on 15 September, and the first election-focused radio programme aired on Sunday 28 September. The last radio programme prior to Election Day was broadcast on Sunday 2 November, while the last issue of the selected newspapers was published on 5 November 2008. The seven-week monitoring period thus covered the weeks between 15 September and 5 November 2008.

Given that New Zealand's South Asian migrant community and its media are concentrated predominantly in Auckland, the case study for this thesis was accordingly focused in Auckland. The South Asian media monitored during the specified seven-week election campaign period comprised:

¹⁹ The liaison person for the South Auckland focus group offered to attend and interpret for the participants, while the language tutor from the private language school in West-Central Auckland offered to be available for assistance with interpreting interview questions. Both offers were made in personal telephone communication in the planning stages

²⁰ Rt Hon Helen Clark, "PM's announcement on the 2008 general election," *speech to Parliament*, 12 September 2008 [online] <http://www.scoop.co.nz/stories/PA0809/S00288.htm> retrieved 15 September 2008

1. *Indian Newslink*: a free, tabloid-sized newspaper published on the 1st and 15th of each month and available through specialty Indian outlets. An online version of the newspaper is available via the *Indian Newslink* website at www.indiannewslink.co.nz.
2. *Radio Tarana, 1386 AM*, Auckland: a Hindi-language radio station which features a one-hour, weekly political issues programme, “Programme Current Affairs,” broadcast on Sunday evenings between 5 pm and 6 pm. During the 2008 election campaign, the hours of this programme were extended from 4.30 pm – 6 pm, and further to 7 pm as the election date drew closer. This programme is broadcast in Hindi but features a regular interview slot (in English) with the prime minister and the leader of the opposition, and includes phone-in comment from listeners. This programme is accessible via online streaming through the Radio Tarana website at www.tarana.co.nz
3. *Kuk Punjabi Samachar*: a free, tabloid-sized, Punjabi-language newspaper published twice monthly (number of pages varies).
4. *Kuk Hindi Samachar*: a free, tabloid-sized Hindi-language newspaper published monthly (number of pages varies).

It should be noted that the intention, on embarking on this case study research, was to include the following South Asian media in the election campaign monitoring conducted for this case study. However, due to the sometimes ephemeral nature of ethnic minority media (as discussed in Chapter Three, p. 51), the following no longer existed in a form appropriate to the case study, or indeed at all, at the time of the 2008 election campaign:

1. *The Global Indian*: a monthly online ‘e-zine’ described as “for Indians abroad.”²¹ This featured regular political comment and election information as applicable, but ceased to appear online in March 2008. However, it re-appeared unexpectedly in October 2008.²²

²¹ The Global Indian www.theglobalindian.co.nz

²² The Global Indian [online] www.theglobalindian.co.nz

2. *The Indian Tribune*: a tabloid-sized, English-language newspaper published fortnightly (alternating with *Indian Newslink*). This newspaper ceased publication in June 2008.²³
3. *The Dawn*: a tabloid-sized, English-language newspaper for the Pakistani community in New Zealand. At the time of planning the media monitoring, *The Dawn*'s publishing cycle proved too irregular and unreliable to be included in the study.²⁴
4. *Darpan the Mirror*: a weekly current affairs programme which featured an 'Insight' political interview segment, broadcast on Triangle Television. While not specifically South Asian, the programme's name 'Darpan' is the Hindi word for mirror, as explained on the programme's website²⁵ and its presenters and production team comprise predominantly Indian and South Asian community representatives. However, this programme ceased to broadcast on Triangle Television in April 2008 and is now a web-based production which targets a broader ethnic base.²⁶

Finally, it should also be noted the second major Hindi-language radio station based in Auckland, Apna 990 AM, was not included in the media monitoring as the programming schedule on its website at the time of selection indicated it did not include political or current affairs talkback programming.²⁷

²³ The Indian Tribune, *personal communication* 28 July 2008

²⁴ The Dawn, *personal communication* 24 August 2008

²⁵ Darpan The Mirror <http://www.teamworkproductions.co.nz/Aboutus.htm>

²⁶ Syed Akbar Kamal, producer, *email communication*, 24 July 2008

²⁷ www.apna990.co.nz Information sourced through website access and personal telephone communication, 25 January 2008. NOTE: according to focus group participants in early November 2008, Apna 990 was accessed by South Asian migrants for political information.

Research Hypothesis and Key Assumptions

Chapter Five presents the thesis case study. Exploring at a practical level, the theoretical concept of the media as a public sphere, the case study tested the overall research hypothesis:

“that ethnic minority media represent a vital complementary public sphere for informing and engaging migrant communities in public political debate and the democratic process”

The formulation, of this hypothesis was based on the following key assumptions, derived from theoretical perspectives examined and presented in the preliminary chapters:

- (1) That for the overall population, the predominant source of political and electoral information is via the media
- (2) That migrant communities do wish to become engaged as active participants in the democratic process
- (3) That some form of a public sphere, or spheres, is/are necessary in modern democratic societies
- (4) That the mainstream media must assume a degree of responsibility for informing and engaging migrant communities, but migrant-specific media perform a ‘complementary’ function in this process

The practical aim of the case study research was to elicit individual, group, and media representative perspectives from within South Asian migrant communities in Auckland, on the election coverage by locally-based South Asian media, and migrants’ level of engagement in politics and the election campaign in the seven-week period leading up to the 2008 election.

Results from two focus groups and one interview conducted in Auckland in the first week of November 2008, prior to the 8 November general election day, were complemented

by survey responses from managers and editors of the media identified above. Qualitative and quantitative content analysis of the same media focused on political and election-related coverage evident in these publications and programmes within news reporting, editorials, election advertising, talkback discussion and political interviews during the seven-week period. The aim of the content analysis was to evaluate the extent of political and electoral informing and reporting and of South Asian engagement in public political debate through selected media during the election campaign.

Chapter Six presents an analysis of the primary research data within the key theoretical context of the media as a public sphere in the democratic process. It assesses the validity and reliability of the methodological approaches selected and applied in testing the hypothesis that ethnic minority media represent a vital complementary public sphere for informing and engaging migrant communities in public political debate and the democratic process.

Chapter Seven concludes this thesis by presenting the key research findings and recommendations for further research in recognition of both the limitations in the methodology and scope of the research presented in this thesis, and of significant observations and findings generated from focus group discussion, radio talkback, and issue-focused newspaper content.

Ultimately, the resulting qualitative and quantitative research data, in conjunction with theoretical discussion on changing conceptions of citizenship and the proliferation of ethnic minority media in response to the specific communications needs of New Zealand's burgeoning migrant communities, provide an alternative perspective on the ways and extent to which new migrants are engaged politically as new citizens and permanent residents in this country. This contribution to the body of academic literature examining the role of ethnic minority media overall is intended to provoke critical consideration of the citizenship engagement challenges facing new migrants in New Zealand, and the imperative for an increasingly polyethnic nation to recognise and accommodate the communications needs of its valued new migrant voices.

Chapter Two

Citizenship Challenges Facing Migrant Communities in New Zealand

The sheer scale of recent global migration patterns has challenged traditional conceptions of citizenship theory. “The speed at which new ethnic minorities have emerged has confounded policy-makers and undermined laws and practices concerned with integration and citizenship” (Castles, 1997: 6). New Zealand has itself experienced a dramatic transformation in its demographic makeup within a 20-year period, and now embraces a further challenge to its conceptions of citizenship as a new generation comprising the New Zealand-born children of post-1987 migrants matures and explores its ethnic and cultural identity.

In February 2000, a conference titled *Revisioning Citizenship for the 21st Century*²⁸ examined and challenged traditional conceptions of citizenship within the rapidly diversifying cultural and ethnic landscape of this country at the beginning of the new millennium. It followed a similarly-focused colloquium held in November, 1998,²⁹ in which contributing academics explored such topics as “Citizenship: Pluralism and Trust”³⁰ and “Citizenship and Social Rights”³¹ within a New Zealand context. Local attention to citizenship theory thus followed global trends in re-examining the traditional notion of citizenship as one of assuming a process of migrant assimilation into the dominant culture. Central to the emerging body of literature examining the changing face of citizenship theory was the concept of *multicultural* citizenship.

²⁸ Centre for New Zealand Jurisprudence, University of Waikato, 22-23 February 2000

²⁹ ‘Revisioning and Reclaiming Citizenship’, 23- 24 November 1998, Centre For New Zealand Jurisprudence, University of Waikato.

³⁰ Morgan, G. (2001) colloquium proceedings, Centre for New Zealand Jurisprudence, University of Waikato

³¹ Hunt, P. (2001) colloquium proceedings, Centre for New Zealand Jurisprudence, University of Waikato

Multicultural Citizenship Theory: International Literature Review

Contemporary multicultural citizenship theorists are drawn to the works of Kymlicka and Parekh in their quest for a revised definition of citizenship in an age of globalisation, unprecedented levels of migration, and rapidly increasing technological sophistication. Kymlicka's seminal 1995 work *Multicultural Citizenship: A Liberal Theory of Minority Rights* seeks to "clarify the basic building blocks for a liberal approach to minority rights" in reaction to a judgment that "most Western political theorists have operated with an idealized model of the polis in which fellow citizens share a common descent, language, and culture" (Kymlicka, 1995: 2).

Kymlicka hastens to emphasise the vagueness of the term 'multicultural' (ibid: 6), and in examining the 'politics' of multiculturalism, focuses on two broad patterns of cultural diversity: *multination states*, comprising national minorities of territorially concentrated cultures incorporated into a larger state; and *polyethnic states*, which exhibit cultural pluralism "if [they] accept large numbers of individuals and families from other cultures as immigrants and [allow] them to maintain some of their ethnic particularity" (ibid:14). Kymlicka qualifies his definition of 'multicultural' as one which does not encompass diversity on the basis of class, gender, sexual orientation, or "the sorts of lifestyle enclaves, social movements, and voluntary associations which others include in the ambit of multiculturalism" (ibid: 19). Rather, his focus is on national and ethnic differences.

In addressing the liberal democratic challenge of accommodating such differences, Kymlicka discusses some of the important ways in which modern democracies have responded to the needs of national minorities and ethnic groups, proposing three forms of group specific rights: (1) self-government rights; (2) polyethnic rights; and (3) special representation rights (ibid: 27). *Self-government rights* are sought by component nations within multination states which may demand some form of political autonomy or territorial jurisdiction "so as to ensure the full and free development of their cultures and the best interests of their people" (ibid: 27).

The concept of *special representation rights* has arisen, according to Kymlicka (ibid: 32), in reaction to an increasing perception that the political process is unrepresentative in reflecting the diversity of the population. While the introduction of a parliamentary system of proportional representation in many Western democracies is considered to have addressed the issue of unrepresentative government to an extent (www.elections.org.nz), Kymlicka draws attention to the idea that a certain number of seats in the legislature should be reserved for members of disadvantaged or marginalised groups (Kymlicka, ibid: 32), as is arguably the case in New Zealand with the allocation of seven designated ‘Māori seats’ in Parliament.³² However, Kymlicka cautions against this “temporary measure,” declaring, “society should seek to remove the oppression and disadvantage, thereby eliminating the need for these rights” (ibid.).

The third form of group-differentiated rights, applicable to the democratic participation focus of this thesis, is that of *polyethnic rights*. In recent years, due to a growing critical mass created by unprecedented levels of migration globally, migrant communities have expanded their earlier demands for freedom of cultural expression into a determination to rid society of discrimination and prejudice, particularly against visible minorities. As Kymlicka highlights, ethnic group and religious minority demands for various forms of public funding of their cultural practices have intensified in recent years (ibid: 31). In New Zealand, this has been achieved by the South Asian community, for example, with both the Auckland and Wellington City Councils’ sponsorship of their respective annual Diwali festivals in partnership with the Asia New Zealand Foundation.³³

In expanding on polyethnic rights, Kymlicka discusses one of the most controversial demands imposed by ethnic groups, that of exemption from laws and regulations that disadvantage them as a result of their religious practices, citing Jews and the yarmulka in the United States military service; Sikhs with turbans in the police force in Canada; and Muslims

³² New Zealand’s electoral system allows for voters of Māori descent to enrol on a separate Māori electoral roll, and the number of Māori seats allocated in Parliament is proportionate to the number of voters registered on this roll. <http://www.elections.org.nz/study/researchers/royal-commission-recommendations-list.html>

³³ Wellington City Council, <http://www.wellington.govt.nz/plans/dap/2007-08/pdfs/13-culture.pdf>; Auckland City Council, <http://www.aucklandcity.govt.nz/whatson/events/diwali/default.asp>

with the chador or hajib instead of school uniform in France (ibid.). Kymlicka explains these ‘group specific’ measures are “intended to help ethnic groups and religious minorities express their cultural peculiarity and pride without it hampering their success in the economic and political institutions of the dominant society” and are usually intended to “promote integration into the larger society, not self-government” (ibid.).

Kymlicka’s core argument focuses on the way members of certain groups are incorporated into a political community, not only as individuals, but as a group, their citizenship rights depending in part on group membership. The demand for representative rights by disadvantaged groups is a demand for inclusion (ibid: 176).

However, critics of Kymlicka’s multicultural citizenship theory have emerged, with critiques from Parekh (2000) and Heywood (2004) presented below. Kymlicka, (citing Citizens’ Forum 1991:128), concedes his critics fear “polyethnic rights impede the integration of immigrants by creating a confusing half-way house between their old nation and citizenship in the new one, reminding immigrants of their different origins instead of their shared symbols, society and future” (ibid: 178). Indeed, he concludes with critical concern that, “the settled rules of political life in many countries are being challenged by a new ‘politics of cultural difference’ ” (ibid: 193), and reveals theorists’ perceptions that it is a threat to liberal democracy. However, Kymlicka claims his theory offers a more ‘optimistic view’ of minority rights in modern democracies because “many of the demands of ethnic and national groups are consistent with liberal principles of individual freedom and social justice” (ibid.).

Parekh (2000) in his contribution to multiculturalism theory, “*Rethinking Multiculturalism: Cultural Diversity and Political Theory*,” challenges Kymlicka’s liberal tendency to “draw a sharp contrast between ethnic groups and nations,” declaring his distinction between immigrants and citizens “too neat” (p. 103). Parekh defines migrants as “probationary citizens or citizens-in-waiting” and therefore considers they are not “qualitatively different from, and may rightly make the same cultural and other claims as, other citizens” (ibid.). According to Parekh, Kymlicka divides cultural groups into national

and non-national or ethnic groups, and assigns them different degrees of moral importance, rights and status (ibid: 104). He also levels criticism at Kymlicka's intolerance of immigrant claims to cultural autonomy as a consequence of his "contingent and detachable view on the nature of immigration" (ibid: 105).

In examining the political structure of multicultural society, Parekh emphasises two conflicting demands that require reconciliation: a multicultural society "should foster a strong sense of unity and common belonging as citizens, as otherwise it cannot act as a united community able to take and enforce collectively-binding decisions and regulate and resolve conflicts" (ibid: 196). A key point highlighted by Parekh within this argument is the notion, "the greater and deeper the diversity in a society, the greater the unity and cohesion it requires to hold itself together and nurture its diversity" (ibid.). He suggests a society held together weakly "feels threatened by differences and lacks the confidence and willingness to welcome and live with them" (ibid.).

While focusing on the need for unity within a multicultural society, Parekh meanwhile cautions against ignoring the demands of diversity, declaring it "an inescapable fact of its collective life [which] can neither be wished out of existence nor suppressed without an unacceptable degree of coercion" (ibid.). He emphasises the desirability of cultural diversity for society as a whole, claiming it "a valuable collective asset" (ibid: 196). In discussing the unsuitability of the assimilationist model within a multicultural society, Parekh concedes there is nothing inherently wrong with assimilation (ibid: 197). However, he questions the extent to which a certain level of assimilation is actually necessary to ensure political unity or should be deemed a precondition of equal citizenship, a question to which he responds emphatically in the negative (ibid.).

Parekh then offers reasons as to why the pressure to assimilate does not always succeed, arguing "cultures are too deeply woven into the lives of their members to be jettisoned at will [and] most ... are embedded in or at least intertwined with religion and outsiders cannot assimilate into them without changing their religion, which they are often reluctant to do" (ibid: 198).

How are the demands of unity and diversity thus to be reconciled? Parekh discusses three modes of political integration: (1) proceduralist; (2) civic assimilationist; (3) and the ‘millet’ model (ibid: 199). The *proceduralist* approach focuses on ensuring peace and stability in multicultural societies on the assumption that deep moral and cultural differences within are not able to be resolved rationally – the state avoids its citizens’ moral and cultural disagreements and makes no controversial demands on them, nor imposes restrictive constraints on their choices (ibid.).

The *civic assimilationist* view tends toward a more consensual approach to unity in a multicultural society, arguing that the political community requires agreement on its structure of authority and on its shared culture. Unlike the assimilationist model, however, this approach does not require comprehensive cultural interaction – its strength and unity lie in its shared *political* culture (ibid: 200). Finally, for proponents of the *millet* model, the state has no moral status and exists solely “to uphold and nurture its constituent cultural communities” (ibid.). It is thus a loose federation of communities in which the state does not interfere and individuals owe their primary loyalty to their respective communities and secondarily to the state (ibid.).

Parekh summarises the conditions of success for a multicultural society thus: it is likely to be “stable, cohesive and at ease with itself if it meets certain conditions [including] a consensually grounded structure of authority; a collectively acceptable set of constitutional rights; a just and impartial state; a multiculturally constituted common culture and multicultural education; and a plural and inclusive view of national identity” (ibid: 236). Political communities are extremely difficult to hold together, Parekh explains, and in a multicultural society, not one of the above by itself is enough to ensure cohesion (ibid: 238).

Heywood (2004) presents core criticisms of multiculturalism and its emphasis on divisions among citizens rather than on what unites them. “[P]articularism displaces universalism; minority rights take precedence over majority interests; and the stress upon ethnicity weakens national or civic unity” (Heywood, 2004: 217-218). Assuming cultural diversity is now inevitable in modern societies, Heywood suggests multiculturalism may also

promote political instability “by emphasizing particularism rather than national cohesion” and may be incoherent “in so far as it both proclaims the advantages of cultural embeddedness and holds that society benefits from exchanges among cultures that will tend [to] weaken their distinctiveness” (ibid: 216).

Presenting theories on multiculturalism from both the right and left perspectives, Heywood argues conservatives forcefully make the case that multicultural societies are “by their nature, fractured and conflict-ridden” and successful and stable societies “must be underpinned by shared values and a common culture” (ibid: 218). A ‘leftist version’ of the idea of conflict between diversity and solidarity, however, highlights the impact on social responsibility of greater ethical and cultural pluralism, and suggests “multicultural societies are destined to have weak welfare states and low political participation” (ibid.).

Multicultural Citizenship: Implications for New Zealand

In identifying how the theoretical arguments of Kymlicka and Parekh might be supported or challenged by the empirical findings of this research project, it is useful first to explore recent developments towards multiculturalism in this country.

As stated, a series of forums was held at the turn of the millennium to examine changing conceptions of citizenship in an increasingly multicultural and polyethnic New Zealand. In addition to the rapidly and visibly changing demographic makeup of this country, a number of critical issues emerged during the 1990s to prompt re-examination of this concept: (1) the challenge of embracing *multiculturalism* within New Zealand's increasingly *bicultural* context; (2) cultural politics and the politicisation of immigration, particularly as a campaign platform during the 1996 election;³⁴ and (3) a perceived failure to complement significant immigration policy changes with adequate measures to assist the post-arrival adjustment of new migrants.

Multiculturalism within a Bicultural Context

Spoonley (2000), in his comments on challenges to existing notions of citizenship as applied to this country, draws attention to the complexity of embracing the ideal of multiculturalism while accommodating Māori cultural and political ambitions and *tino rangatiratanga*, or self-determination (Spoonley, 2000: 26). Strengthening indigenous self-assertion is a phenomenon in just a handful of states and adds a challenging dimension to multicultural citizenship theory and its ideal of pluralism and cultural unity.

³⁴ Refer Beal, T. (2002) "Out of the Shadows: Emerging Political and Civil Participation of the Chinese in New Zealand," School of Marketing and International Business, Victoria University of Wellington, *Paper delivered to the Asia Pacific Public Affairs Forum, Kaohsiung, 17-18 July 2002* [online]
http://www.google.co.nz/search?hl=en&q=immigration+and+the+1996+election&meta=cr%3DcountryNZ&rlz=1W1GPEA_en

Spoonley emphasises, “multiculturalism is seen as diametrically opposed to biculturalism in the sense that Māori are simply deemed yet another minority ethnic group in New Zealand with the same, but no more, rights than any other ethnic group” (ibid.). He adds multiculturalism is seen to be inclusive, while biculturalism often appears exclusive, and suggests many sense a major tension between the two. Spoonley urges New Zealand to develop a notion that is workable, widely acceptable, and reflects the significance of cultural identity (ibid: 37).

A similar assessment of the concept of multiculturalism within a bicultural context is provided by Smits (2006), who discusses the complexity of race relations discourse in New Zealand being dominated by the politics and ethics of the Treaty of Waitangi. She questions the impact of multiculturalism on biculturalism and presents critical argument regarding the fundamental differences between the claims of the two: “immigrant communities demand distributive justice in terms of greater access to positions of status and power,” while “Māori request special status within the constitution or recognition of Treaty-based claims” (Smits, in Miller, (ed.), 2006: 31). Smits emphasises the importance of political discourse keeping pace with the reality of New Zealand’s polyethnicity, and cautions that multiculturalism and biculturalism can no longer be considered mutually exclusive if New Zealand is to achieve a workable multicultural model of citizenship (ibid: 32).

The Politicisation of Immigration

The second of the critical issues affecting citizenship theory to emerge during the 1990s was that of the ‘politicisation’ of immigration. As stated, New Zealand experienced unprecedented levels of immigration during this decade, with the ethnic composition of migrants shifting dramatically from predominantly European to a proportionately large number of immigrants of Asian ethnicity. Moreover, not only the ethnic composition altered, but the nature and intent of migrants also.

Trlin and Watts (2004) examined the outcomes of radical changes to immigration policy in the late 1980s and throughout the 1990s (Trlin and Watts, in Spoonley, MacPherson and Pearson (eds.), 2004: 111-134). The politicisation of immigration and public attitudes, as discussed by Trlin and Watts, referred to public and media perceptions that immigration was problematic (ibid: 115). Asian immigration was quickly identified as the focus of the problem in the mid-1990s, and was accordingly seized upon as a populist election campaign platform for Winston Peters and the New Zealand First political party during the 1996 general election (ibid: 115-116). Anti-Asian sentiment was evident in racist and divisive news headlines prevalent during this decade and beyond.³⁵

McMillan (2006) similarly highlights the divisive potential of immigration policy reform, claiming immigration is “an issue capable of generating considerable political heat – never more so than during election year” (McMillan, in Miller, (ed.) 2006: 646). However, she expresses the hope that immigration policy will continue to be driven by informed understanding of the complexities and rationale behind migration and not by “the desire of politicians to gain political support by inciting xenophobia and a mistrust of particular migrant groups” (ibid: 648).

Immigration Policy and Immigrant Settlement: A Flawed Relationship

The third issue concerning immigration and citizenship is that of a perceived failure to complement immigration policy reform with adequate measures to assist the post-arrival adjustment of migrants. Trlin and Watts deem immigration policy reform and immigrant settlement “a flawed relationship at the turn of the millennium” (Trlin and Watts, ibid: 111),

³⁵ For example, “The Inv-Asian,” referred to in a conference paper by Helene Wong, “Image, Identity and the Media,” 3 October, 1998 [online] <http://www.stevenyoung.co.nz/The-Chinese-in-New-Zealand/Identity/Image-Identity-and-the-Media.html> ; Coddington, D. “Asian Angst: Is it time to send some back?” *North and South*, Issue 249, December 2006: 38-47

and consider the politicisation of immigration, as discussed above, to be the cause of this failed relationship.

They specifically examine the immigration policy amendment of 1995, which introduced: a quota management system; a points-based ranking system; a stringent minimum English-language requirement; and modifications to the settlement factor points system. Focused on the *economic* stream of migrants, the amendment sought to remove sources of tension arguably caused by earlier immigration policy amendments, namely “the employability of skilled immigrants, negative media attention, negative public attitudes towards Asian immigration and aspects of immigration settlement, as well as unintended costs to New Zealand” (ibid: 113).

Aside from the politicisation of immigration, Trlin and Watts focus on the volume and composition of immigration, and settlement difficulties and issues arising from the 1995 policy. In terms of the volume and composition of immigration, a progressive decline in numbers approved for permanent residence was recorded between 1995 and 1999 (ibid: 117). It coincided with a “ ‘softening’ in public opinion toward the number of Asian immigrants” (ibid.), but this proved short-lived, as a 2002 survey revealed an abrupt increase in numbers of respondents considering there were “too many” Asian immigrants in New Zealand (ibid:117, citing Hill, 2000, and Cone, 2002). A total of 190,000 people were approved for residence in the year ending June 2002, of whom 54.5% were of Asian country origin, and according to Trlin and Watts, public attitudes seemed readily influenced by sharp and visible increases in the numbers of Asians opting to settle in this country (ibid.).

With regard to settlement difficulties, Trlin and Watts (ibid: 119-121) report on a longitudinal study examining the migration and settlement experiences of two panels of skilled migrants from Mainland China and India. The report reveals six barriers which emerged to explain the employment difficulties experienced by both panels. These were: (1) lack of New Zealand qualifications; (2) lack of New Zealand work experience; (3) lack of English proficiency; (4) discrimination by employers and recruitment agencies; (5) difficulty in transferring homeland skills and experience to comparable positions in New Zealand; and

(6) organisational deficiencies in the operation, requirements and regulations of Work and Income New Zealand and personnel recruitment agencies, particularly in being perceived as primarily interested in unskilled workers and unable to manage the needs of professional migrants.

Trlin and Watts concede more recent settlement initiatives indicate a definite change in attitude and action on immigration policy and settlement (ibid: 126), and outline their concept of a balanced, well-integrated institutional structure of immigration consisting of three equal and interacting components: (1) an immigration policy which regulates entry, is administered impartially, and is flexible to permit adjustment as required in the national interest; (2) an immigrant policy which is geared to the economic, social and cultural post-settlement needs of immigrants; and (3) an ethnic relations policy appropriate to a situation of emerging multiculturalism (ibid: 130).

Multiculturalism and Government Policy

Has New Zealand developed an ethnic relations policy accommodating emerging multiculturalism? The newly-elected Labour Government in 1999 created a ministerial portfolio for Ethnic Affairs in December of that year, and the Office of Ethnic Affairs was officially launched in May 2001.³⁶ Both may be considered tangible government initiatives in this direction. At its launch, the Office of Ethnic Affairs declared its commitment to improving outcomes for ethnic communities in New Zealand, with then Minister, Hon George Hawkins, explaining the establishment of the office, and his appointment as the Minister for Ethnic Affairs, were only part of a much larger strategy designed to benefit ethnic communities.³⁷ Hawkins outlined government expenditure on refugee and migrant settlement initiatives since the Labour-Alliance coalition had gained office in 1999.

³⁶ Hawkins, Hon. G. *Speech at the launch of the Office of Ethnic Affairs*, 1 May 2001, Wellington from <http://www.beehive.govt.nz/ViewDocument.aspx?DocumentID=10618>

³⁷ ibid.

The success of policy developments which reflect the goals embodied in Trlin and Watts' concept outlined above, and the ideals inherent in policy initiatives implemented by the Office of Ethnic Affairs since 2001, are tested in survey and focus group interviews presented in the case study in Chapter Five of this thesis. Participants were invited to comment on their experiences of settlement and integration since their arrival as new migrants, and offer their perspective on cultural and identity politics as it affects their individual lives. Focus group discussions yielded an unexpected depth of sentiment over integration and settlement issues.

Identity Politics within Polyethnic Societies

Addressing the *Revisioning and Reclaiming Citizenship* conference in November 1998,³⁸ Professor Andrew Sharp discussed the notion of individual members of ethnic groups within a state identifying as both a citizen of the state and a member of an ethnic group. He explained in doing so, these individuals will be “affirming the enjoyment of the rights and affections appropriate to both sortals in question and committing [themselves] to discharging the duties of those roles” (Sharp, 1998: 80). Sharp accordingly introduces the concept of multiple identities and their “potentially conflicting and contradictory commitments, rights, duties, and affections” (ibid.). In the context of New Zealand's now ethnically diverse population, Sharp's concept of multiple identities and conflicting and contradictory commitments illustrates the complexity of citizenship challenges facing new migrants.

Moreover, different migrant communities face different citizenship challenges. In the 1990s, the term ‘Asian’ was used, often derogatorily to represent a hugely diverse cross-section of immigrants from all corners of Asia, homogenising broad cultural, religious, and ethnic differences (Bartley, ibid: 161). In focusing on the South Asian migrant community

³⁸ Sharp, A. “Citizenship, Ethnicity and the Other in New Zealand” from the proceedings of the *Revisioning and Reclaiming Citizenship* conference, University of Waikato, November 1998.

in particular, this thesis distinguishes the Indian, Pakistani, and Hindi-speaking migrant community from the broader Asian migrant community in New Zealand.

Strengthening Voice: The South Asian Community in New Zealand

In late February 2007, a South Asian Forum, hosted by the Office of Ethnic Affairs, was held in a community hall in New Lynn, Auckland.³⁹ Featuring an official welcome by a prominent New Zealander of Indo-Fijian descent, Governor General Anand Satyanand, the forum was opened by the director of the Office of Ethnic Affairs Mervin Singham, himself a member of the Malaysian Sri Lankan community.

Barely a week earlier, the Asian Studies Institute at Victoria University of Wellington had facilitated and hosted a workshop entitled “New Zealand and India: Migration, Perceptions and Relations,”⁴⁰ while a second Office of Ethnic Affairs South Asian forum was subsequently held in Wellington in late May 2007.⁴¹ All events featured noted academics and community leaders presenting personal perspectives on ‘matters South Asian’ in New Zealand.

While a seemingly unremarkable coincidence, the series of events marked heightened academic and public interest in the issues, challenges, and future of South Asian migrant communities in this country. Indeed, at the Auckland forum, New Zealand’s first South Asian conference was proposed for 2008/09.⁴²

Why the notable increase in interest in specifically South Asian community issues? As indicated, census data released in 2007 revealed the extended South Asian community

³⁹ Office of Ethnic Affairs, *South Asian Forum Programme*, information sourced through personal communication with Office of Ethnic Affairs, Auckland, 27 February 2007

⁴⁰ Asian Studies Institute, “New Zealand and India: Migrations, Perceptions, and Relations”, *workshop abstracts*, sourced through personal communication with ASI, Wellington, 3 March 2007

⁴¹ Office of Ethnic Affairs, South Asia Forum, Wellington, from http://www.ethnicaffairs.govt.nz/oeawebsite.nsf/wpg_URL/Advisory-Services-Projects-South-Asian-Forum-Wellington-26-May-2007?OpenDocument

⁴² Office of Ethnic Affairs South Asian Forum programme, *ibid.* Note: as at the time of writing, this forum had not been held: *refer* http://www.dia.govt.nz/oeawebsite.nsf/wpg_URL/Whats-Happening-Previous-Ethnic-Affairs-Events-Index

represented the fastest-growing ethnic group in New Zealand,⁴³ with 115,000 New Zealand residents identifying within the broadly-defined category of ‘South Asian’.⁴⁴ (To reiterate, for the purposes of this research, the definition of ‘South Asian’ extends to Indo-Fijian migrants, as they are identified within the target audience and readership of the media analysed in this paper.)⁴⁵ The combination of rapidly-growing critical mass and an obvious commitment by the Office of Ethnic Affairs to accommodate, facilitate, and celebrate ethnic and cultural diversity in this country,⁴⁶ have evidently enabled the South Asian community to raise its profile and openly celebrate its culture and heritage.

Concurrent workshops at the Auckland forum focused on South Asian arts, culture and heritage, exploring ways the South Asian community can maintain and express culture and heritage in New Zealand as a contribution to New Zealand’s national identity and economic development. The Wellington Asian Studies Institute workshop featured, for example, a presentation by Nabeel Zubeeri of the University of Auckland, examining the media and diaspora in Aotearoa/New Zealand, and offered some potential direction for media research regarding Indian and South Asian diasporas. Also presented at this workshop was an explorative sociological study of integration and community life among Indian/South Asian migrants in Christchurch, with observations on the state of ‘multiculturalism’ in Christchurch and in New Zealand in general.⁴⁷

Transnationalism and the South Asian Community in Auckland

Academic interest in ‘matters South Asian’ has focused to an extent, on the concept of transnationalism - of immigrants with cross-border connections and activities. In a 2005 study of the Indian transnational group in New Zealand, Friesen et al. (2005: 385-401)

⁴³ Statistics New Zealand, (www.stats.govt.nz)

⁴⁴ Refer Chapter 1, footnote #6, for explanatory data

⁴⁵ Refer, for example, www.indiannewslink.co.nz; www.theglobalindian.co.nz

⁴⁶ Office of Ethnic Affairs, www.ethicaffairs.govt.nz

⁴⁷ Asian Studies Institute workshop, Asian Studies Institute, “New Zealand and India: Migrations, Perceptions, and Relations”, *workshop abstracts*, sourced through personal communication with ASI, Wellington, 3 March 2007

examine the transformation of the Auckland suburb of Sandringham into an emerging transnational urban ‘space’ for the expanding Indian community in this city. They explain that, in terms of the level of ethnic diversification in recent years, Sandringham’s has been one of the most dramatic of any suburb in New Zealand. They emphasise there is a strong imperative towards establishing a pan-Indian identity and political presence in New Zealand and pan-Indian consciousness is also reflected in a media presence in New Zealand (ibid: 391).

Revised conceptions of transnationalism have gained currency in line with academic interest in redefining citizenship in the 21st century. Friesen et al. draw on the work of Vertovec (1999 and 2000) in their examination of transnationalism as applied to the Indian community in Auckland. In particular, they utilise Vertovec’s conceptual premises on the nature of transnationalism as: (1) social morphology; (2) type of consciousness; and (3) mode of cultural reproduction, highlighting, for example, there is increasing evidence the Indian community in New Zealand comprises “a social formation spanning borders” (Vertovec, 1999:449.)

Vertovec’s notion of transnationalism as a kind of “diasporic consciousness marked by dual and multiple identifications” (Friesen, et al., ibid: 389) is also emphasised in their research, with the duality of being Indian and a New Zealander, as well as the multiple identities of many Indian New Zealanders evidence of the reality of this premise. Indeed, 2006 census data reveal several overlapping categories applicable in the section on South Asian residents, with the opportunity to identify with more than one ethnicity as well as with religious affiliations, e.g. Tamil, and Sikh.⁴⁸

Specific suburban changes the authors note since 1987, in accordance with Vertovec’s conceptualisation of transnationalism as the ‘reconstruction of place or locality,’ (ibid: 395) are the proliferation of retail outlets displaying transnational linkages, and the diverse and clearly evident places of religious worship (ibid: 395). Friesen et al. conclude the Indian community in New Zealand, and Sandringham in particular, have evolved into “an

⁴⁸ Statistics New Zealand, *2006 Census data*, from www.stats.govt.nz.

increasingly complex layering of transnational connections involving movements of people, goods and information,” adding these connections may not be on the scale of global cities but they are “significant and reflect a local response to globalisation processes” (ibid: 395).

Spoonley and Macpherson (2004) similarly examine new conceptions of transnationalism within the New Zealand context, emphasising its more recent significance in any understanding of immigration patterns. Their examination of Asian transnationalism post-1987, suggests there is still a significant degree of ongoing movement with origin communities and households even among those who have been approved as immigrants (Spoonley and MacPherson, in Spoonley, MacPherson and Pearson (eds.), 2004:186). They emphasise Asian transnationalism is at an early stage in its development in this country but it has attracted attention for what it adds to New Zealand’s global relationships (ibid: 187). Challenges facing these migrants include: the difficulty of re-establishing their business in New Zealand, and issues surrounding gaining employment in a labour market which places considerable emphasis on English-language proficiency and New Zealand experience. Spoonley and Macpherson suggest in light of the latter, that maintaining a business and household in an origin society is “an insurance policy” (ibid: 187, citing Ip, 2000, and Beal and Sos, 1999).

Transnationalism and Migrant Integration Issues

How does perceived transnational status affect the settlement and integration process of new migrants? Moreover, is formal citizenship in one’s adopted country any longer desirable or even necessary in an age of transnational communities and cross-border connections? In an editorial comment in Auckland-based *Indian Newslink* in October 2005, just weeks from an announcement by the Indian Government of the implementation of new legislation allowing members of the disparate Indian diaspora to gain the official status and

benefits of Overseas Citizenship of India,⁴⁹ editor Venkat Raman urged New Zealand resident Indians not to forget their roles and responsibilities in New Zealand. “While the overseas Indian citizenship would fructify many an Indian dream, it should not polarise thoughts and deeds. Every Indian should feel himself or herself to be a New Zealander and behave and contribute as such.”⁵⁰

Raman emphasises the positive in his comment, suggesting Indians in New Zealand enjoy such amenities as “Hindi-language radio and cinema, temples for most denominations, restaurants serving every variation of regional cuisine, cricket grounds, pageants and a full calendar of cultural events.” He adds the clean, green country is “so cosy that it has long served as a home [for those] who came to it seeking greener pastures. Human rights form the core of our existence and we have allowed almost everyone, including visitors, to speak their minds” (ibid.).

Citizenship challenges facing South Asian migrants in New Zealand thus seek to reconcile the division between the idealism expressed above and the realities of gaining suitable employment and establishing businesses, potential discrimination on cultural and religious grounds, and achieving ‘voice’ as a minority-status, yet valued New Zealander. However, as Friesen et al. argue (Friesen et al., ibid: 391), rather than inhibit the integration process due to a perceived lack of allegiance to the adoptive country, transnational status may in fact facilitate the acceptance of South Asian migrants as New Zealand citizens through achieving critical mass and establishing a pan-Indian identity. The authors’ Sandringham study illustrates the linkages and understanding achieved between migrant and host communities, migrants and their homelands, and the disparate Indian communities (ibid: 391).

⁴⁹ Overseas Citizenship of India legislation implemented 2 December 2005

⁵⁰ Raman, V. “The best of two worlds,” *Indian Newslink*, 1 October 2005, from www.indiannewslink.co.nz/OCTOBER_1_2005_WEB_EDITION/editorial

Multicultural Citizenship Theory – Implications for Empirical Findings

To what extent might the theoretical arguments on multicultural citizenship presented above be supported or challenged by the empirical findings of this research project? Kymlicka explains his definition of diversity focuses on national and ethnic difference, arguing *polyethnic* states exhibit cultural pluralism “if [they] accept large numbers of individuals and families from other cultures as immigrants and [allow] them to maintain some of their ethnic particularity” (refer p. 18). While there are increasingly diverse and visible examples of ethnic particularity in New Zealand, this thesis focuses on *ethnic minority media* as one form of this.

Within Kymlicka’s theoretical argument, the case study findings would support the research hypothesis if they reveal that ethnic minority media clearly represent a form of ethnic particularity contributing positively towards cultural pluralism. This would be achieved by providing an important public space through which migrant communities can access information about the election, electoral candidates, voting system and electoral procedure in either their own language or a forum recognising common migrant experiences, cultural and political backgrounds. The goal would be successful integration and acceptance, due in part to the accessibility and benefits of migrant-specific media, into New Zealand’s political community.

Kymlicka’s core argument, as stated, focuses on the way members of certain groups are incorporated into a political community, both as individuals and as a group, with their citizenship rights depending in part on group membership. Accordingly, the case study findings would support the hypothesis if they indicate that South Asian migrants, as a burgeoning ethnic entity, are incorporated into the New Zealand political community through an ethnic- or migrant-specific channel of communication. ‘Incorporation’ would be indicated by accessibility to information and discussion on political issues, the candidates, voting and procedural information and a forum for debating issues, particularly those affecting the South Asian community.

Parekh's three modes of political integration (refer p. 23) provide useful guidelines for assessing the role of ethnic minority media as an important means through which migrant communities may be incorporated into a political community. In terms of the New Zealand experience, Parekh's *civic assimilationist* model is arguably the most desirable of the three. As discussed, this view tends toward a more consensual approach to unity in a multicultural society and does not require comprehensive cultural interaction – its strength and unity lie in its shared *political* culture.

Within the theoretical framework of Parekh's model, empirical findings of this research would support the hypothesis if they show ethnic minority media, as a *complementary* public sphere, contribute to an interactive political dialogue yet allow for the provision of a forum to debate community-specific issues either in migrant-specific languages or in an English language sphere which acknowledges the cultural backgrounds and experiences of its members.

Summary

Parekh's argument that a non-cohesive society feels threatened by differences and lacks the confidence and willingness to welcome and live with them, suggests New Zealand has progressed significantly along the path towards multiculturalism since the divisive days of the mid-1990s. The South Asian community has grown significantly in size and prominence since 2001 and, as indicated, has attracted increased academic interest in recent years. As it strengthens its own identity within the broadly-defined category of 'Asian,' so does it strengthen its sense of place and purpose in this country. In terms of citizenship challenges and the facility to participate in, and contribute meaningfully to, New Zealand society, South Asian migrants are seemingly achieving and receiving voice in strengthening numbers. One key question arises: to what extent has this level of public participation been achieved through an increasingly diverse, sophisticated, and extensive migrant-specific communications network?

Chapter Three

The Media as a Public Sphere in the Democratic Process

“The mass media play a central role in democratic societies, providing an important means of communicating information and a critical understanding of political process. In societies that are becoming more culturally diverse as part of an ongoing nation-building process, the centrality and critical nature of that role is accentuated, with the need to explain the political options and diversity of that society. To ignore or marginalise ethnic groups ... is incompatible with the democratic role of the media.”

Spoonley, (2004:23)⁵¹

In the 21st century, politics, more than ever, cannot exist without communication. By its very nature, and independent of its substantive or symbolic value, politics must sooner or later go through the ‘publicity’ stage, which entails use of the media (for example, to make known the terms of a policy decision) as a means of persuasion, and exposure to scrutiny by the press (Mazzoleni and Schulz, 1999: 250). The influential power of media communication in the democratic process has attracted increased academic attention in recent years, with some scholars claiming politics *is* communication (Meadow, 1980).

In examining the role of the media as a public sphere in the democratic process, this chapter draws on “the best-known modern representation of the media and the public sphere,” (Curran, in Dahlgren and Sparks (eds.)1991:28) advanced by Jürgen Habermas in *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere* (1989). In particular, it focuses on Habermas’ discussion on manufactured publicity and nonpublic opinion with regard to the voting behaviour of the population. Habermas argues “the extent to which the public sphere as an element in the political realm has disintegrated as a sphere of ongoing participation in a rational-critical debate concerning public authority is measured by the degree to which it has

⁵¹ Citing Barker (1999:78)

become a genuine publicist task for parties to generate periodically something like a public sphere to begin with” (Habermas, 1989: 211).

Habermas alludes to the role of the media in generating public interest and debate in the decision-making process affecting the lives of individual citizens, emphasising public opinion is most likely to be influenced during “the staged or manipulatively manufactured public sphere of the election campaign” (ibid: 214). The competing tendencies of ‘staged’ versus ‘critical’ publicity marking the political public sphere of the welfare state are explained by Habermas (ibid: 232):

- 1) insofar as it represents the collapse of the public sphere of civil society, the social welfare state makes room for a staged and manipulative publicity displayed by organisations over the heads of a mediatised public
- 2) conversely, the social-welfare state clings to the mandate of a political public sphere according to which the public is to set in motion a critical process of public communication through the very organisations that mediatise it

Habermas concludes by highlighting the uncertainty of the ‘struggle’ between these opposing concepts, urging that they not be degraded into mere ideology, as was arguably the case with the bourgeois public sphere during the period of its liberal development (ibid: 235).

After Habermas: Rethinking the Public Sphere

With the conglomeration of media ownership and rapidly increasing sophistication of media technology in the 1990s, the Habermasian concept of the media as a public sphere invited scrutiny and generated robust academic debate. Dahlgren (1991) highlights the significant role of the mass media, explaining the public sphere as: “a concept which, in the context of today’s society, points to the issues of how and to what extent the mass media, especially in their journalistic role, can help citizens learn about the world, debate their responses to it and reach informed decisions about what courses of action to adopt” (Dahlgren, in Dahlgren and Sparks (eds.), 1991: 1). Dahlgren focuses his critique of Habermas on three particularly ambiguous points in Habermas’ analysis:

- (1) “The ideal of the bourgeois public sphere ... is retained as a model, a vision, at the same time as its historical manifestation is found lacking and needs to be transcended” (ibid: 5)
- (2) He fails to discuss alternative, ‘plebian,’ popular, informal or oppositional public spheres, which “leaves a big theoretic vacuum ... [f]or under both the periods of advanced capitalism, there have existed other fora which have shaped people’s political consciousness ... and served as networks for exchange of information” (ibid: 6)
- (3) In Habermas’ theory, “there seems to be an implicit understanding of how people carry out conversation and arrive at political opinions which seems strangely abstract and formalistic” (ibid: 6)

In reconstructing a conceptualisation of the public sphere as an analytical category for research in contemporary, post-bourgeois society, Dahlgren emphasises a need “to examine the institutional configurations within the media and the social order as a whole and their relevance for the democratic participation of citizens” (ibid: 9). He describes the

institutional configurations of the prevailing social order in a new media age as “staggering in their complexity” but argues “the category of the public sphere can help us to order these configurations in a cohesive manner from the standpoint of the criteria of citizen access and participation in the political process” (ibid: 10).

Curran’s critique of Habermas, encompassed in his discussion *Rethinking the media as a public sphere* (in Dahlgren and Sparks, ibid: 28-57), evaluates Habermasian classical liberal theory within the context of subsequent historical research. It offers a simplified interpretation of the role of ‘publicity’ within the political public sphere, as originally advanced by Habermas, emphasising Habermas’ ‘historical concreteness’ and ‘intellectual specificity’ were due to his study having emanated from the Frankfurt School tradition of Critical Theory (ibid: 7). Curran’s critique highlights perceived deficiencies in Habermas’ approach. In dissecting and ultimately dismissing aspects of Habermasian theory, Curran draws together features of a *radical democratic* approach to the concept of the media as a public sphere, and advances it as a formal theory.

Curran’s interpretation describes the public sphere as the space between government and society in which private individuals exercise formal and informal control over the state: formally through the election of governments, and informally through the pressure of public opinion (ibid: 29). He emphasises the central role of the media in this process, explaining:

- They distribute the information necessary to make an informed choice at election time
- They facilitate the formation of public opinion by providing an independent forum of debate
- They enable the people to shape the conduct of government by articulating their views.

(ibid: 29)

However, he challenges the traditionalist version of classical liberal theory on the media’s function, which claims “the key social relationship that needs to be policed by an ever vigilant media is ... the nexus between individuals and the state” (ibid: 29), arguing it

fails to account adequately for the way power is exercised through capitalist and patriarchal structures. Moreover, he argues classical liberal theory:

- does not consider how the media relate to wider social cleavages in society
- does not address the question of how the media function in relation to modern systems of representation in liberal democracies
- as a result, has nothing useful to say about the way the media can invigorate the structures of liberal democracy (ibid: 29).

Having highlighted deficiencies in Habermas' approach, Curran proposes constructive features of the *radical democratic approach* to the role of the media in the public sphere, claiming a basic requirement of a democratic media system should be that it represents all significant interests in society. It should:

- facilitate their participation in the public domain
- enable them to contribute to public debate and have an input into the framing of public policy
- facilitate the functioning of representative organisations and expose their internal processes to public scrutiny (ibid: 30).

Fraser (1990), in her contribution to the discourse on rethinking the public sphere, bases her argument on the premise "something like Habermas' idea of the public sphere is indispensable to critical social theory and to democratic political practice" (Fraser, 1990: 57). However, she too argues the model Habermas advocates is not entirely satisfactory, particularly in the extent to which it idealises and simplifies the concept of a liberal public sphere (ibid: 60).

Of significance, within the context of examining migrant political engagement through ethnic minority media, is Fraser's contention "public life in egalitarian, multi-cultural societies cannot consist exclusively in a single, comprehensive public sphere" (ibid:

69). She argues the idea of a multicultural society can make sense only if it supposes a plurality of public arenas in which groups with diverse values and rhetorics participate. “By definition, such a society must contain a multiplicity of publics” (ibid: 69). Her concept of participation is one which means being able to speak in one’s own voice to construct and express ones cultural identity through idiom and style – not through a single, culturally-neutral lens, rather through multiple public spheres which allow the formation not only of discursive opinion but also of social identities (ibid. 68-69).

Fraser speculates on the possibility of a more comprehensive public sphere in which members of different, more limited publics communicate across lines of cultural diversity, suggesting her “hypothetical, egalitarian, multicultural society would surely have to entertain debates over policies and issues affecting everyone” (ibid. 69). She argues communication across lines of cultural difference is not impossible, but would become so if it required the bracketing of differences.

Fraser’s Multiple Public Sphere Theory as an Analytical Framework

Fraser’s multiple public sphere theory provides a particularly useful framework for analysing the role of ethnic minority media in the democratic process, as it arguably presupposes a role for mainstream media, but suggests an equally significant complementary role for alternative, or in this case, migrant-specific media for informing and engaging audiences within culturally and linguistically appropriate contexts. Accordingly, this theory provides the key analytical framework for processing the primary research data presented in Chapter Six, based on a summarised version of Fraser’s core applicable principles:

- (1) Multicultural societies require more than a single, comprehensive public sphere to enable participation by groups of “diverse values and rhetorics.”
- (2) Participation means being able to speak in one’s own voice in order to express cultural identity through idiom and style.
- (3) Multiple public spheres allow the existence of alternative opinions and social identities.

The incorporation of the explanatory term “complementary” into the key research question and hypothesis in this thesis acknowledges the responsibility of mainstream media to represent migrant interests, yet signifies the importance of ethnic minority media in providing an alternative channel of communication which enables migrant communities to speak in their own voice to construct and express their cultural identity through idiom and style. Analysing the case study research data within this conceptual framework thus allows flexibility in assessing the role of ethnic minority media, as it does not presuppose any demarcation between the two ‘public spheres,’ rather it assumes an overlap in the roles and responsibilities of each.

The perceived risks of ignoring the demands of diversity highlight the question of inadequate, inaccurate mainstream media representation of ethnic minorities. To what extent can the establishment of independent, migrant-specific media be attributed to perceived non-representation of minorities in the mainstream media? And what do scholars think ethnic minority media do for democracy and participation?

Mainstream Media Non-representation of Migrants

Within the context of this thesis and its focus on migrant participation in public political debate, the ideal of all significant interests in society being represented by a democratic media system that ‘facilitates individual participation in the public domain’ is, indeed, an ideal. A democratic media system which enables individuals, and in particular new migrants, to contribute to public debate and have an input into public policy formation is, similarly, an ideal. The extent to which this desired outcome is facilitated by the *mainstream* media has been the subject of research and debate, both internationally and in New Zealand, by critical social theorists concerned with minority representation in the media.

MacPherson and Spoonley (2004) discuss mass media discourse in terms of its tendency to “define the contours of ‘other’ groups,” highlighting cases where several distinct

ethnicities are subsumed under a single ‘ethnic’ label and represented by the media as a single ‘group’ with apparently common interests and traits” (MacPherson and Spoonley, in Spoonley, MacPherson and Pearson (eds.), 2004: 224). They suggest media decisions to categorise different groups with diverse histories as a single entity can have a profound impact on the public perception of the apparent scale of the issue and the urgency of addressing it. “The apparently larger group thus created can be portrayed by populist politicians as a more credible social and economic threat than smaller isolated groups. In extreme cases, the broadcasting of these claims can create mass anxiety and alarm and give rise to ‘moral panics,’ which result in sudden and irrational public reactions against ethnic groups” (ibid: 224).

In the 1990s, the single ethnic label ‘Asian’ was used (and arguably *misused*) extensively in the media to refer to migrants from a broad geographical area, and indeed included New Zealand-born citizens of Asian descent (ibid: 225). MacPherson and Spoonley argue a media decision to present an issue as an ‘ethnic’ phenomenon, and the resulting selection of images, terms and arguments employed to ‘explain’ the issue, influence the way audiences consume the information and ultimately form an opinion on the issue (ibid: 224). The ‘politicisation’ of immigration in the 1990s, for example, saw widespread media reporting on so-called ‘Inv-Asian’ and the ‘Asianisation’ of New Zealand (ibid: 225). Media homogenisation of Asian immigrants affected all sectors of the broadly-defined Asian migrant community.

It has been only in recent years that the distinctly separate label ‘South Asian’ has gained popular recognition, due in part to the significant increase in numbers of South Asian migrants since 2001 (www.stats.govt.nz), but also to the official adoption and use of the term by government and community groups (refer, for example, Office of Ethnic Affairs ‘South Asian’ Forum).⁵² Notably however, focus group research data in Chapter Five reveal

⁵² It is notable three South Asian conferences/forums were held in 2007, and a full South Asian conference was under discussion for 2008/2009 in conjunction with the Office of Ethnic Affairs. The Department of Sociology at the University of Canterbury has conducted sociological research into the South Asian community in Christchurch, while Friesen et al. in 2005 published a detailed study of *Indian Transnationalism and New Suburban Spaces in Auckland* (refer bibliography).

participants appeared not to identify with either ‘Asian’ or ‘South Asian,’ identifying themselves rather as Indian or Pakistani.

Motivation for Establishing Ethnic Minority Media

To what extent is the establishment of independent, migrant-specific media attributable to the mis- or non-representation of minorities in the mainstream media? Spoonley (2004:18-21) presents immigrant media as a potential response to the politicisation of immigration in the 1990s, as discussed above, and the negative portrayal of Asians in the mainstream media. He explains migrant-specific media have proliferated in New Zealand since the early 1990s with the expansion of new information technologies, and being locally-based, “speak directly to their audience ... their message is not filtered or constructed by the mass media” (ibid: 18).

Associate Professor Arlene Morgan, specialising in journalism and ethnicity at Columbia Journalism School, sees the splintering of the media in ways which effectively provide minorities with their own sources of information, as a direct response to the inadequacies of the mainstream media (*Sunday*, Radio New Zealand National, 20 July 2007). However, she fears ‘the ethnic media’ can get so powerful that a fragmented society can result, and indeed, she anticipates even more fragmentation with technological advancement and the Internet. Morgan argues the more successful the ethnic media are, the less the mainstream media feel bound to direct attention to ethnic minorities. She urges more collaboration between mainstream and ethnic media, which she accepts is occurring in some sectors of the United States media. However, Morgan concedes while there should be a mix of mainstream media stories that can be accessed by ethnic media and vice versa, there are some specific stories that should remain in the ethnic media, as they would hold little interest for mainstream audiences (ibid).

Collaboration between New Zealand's mainstream and ethnic media achieved prominence during the Chinese murder-abandonment case, known as the "Pumpkin Case," in Auckland in September 2007 (www.nzherald.co.nz, 21 September, 2007). As it emerged the little Chinese girl abandoned at a Melbourne railway station was a New Zealand resident, New Zealand's mainstream media, whose attempts to source information were hampered by language barriers, sought details and comment from local Chinese-language media in Auckland to develop stories for mainstream network news broadcasts.

Network news reporters ultimately interviewed reporters from Chinese-language broadcasters WTV and SkyKiwi in Auckland to expand news stories for primetime broadcasts (*Insight*, Radio New Zealand National, 11 November, 2007). The Chinese-language media in Auckland soon became part of the story themselves, as mainstream media reports began to focus not only on details of the case, but of the existence of a growing network of independent, Mandarin- and Cantonese- language local media with sizeable and expanding audiences (*ibid*).

It should also be noted that Radio New Zealand National, within a period of just four months in 2007, broadcast three in-depth features examining the issue of media diversity, mainstream media under-representation of minorities, and the rapidly expanding ethnic minority media sector.⁵³ Moreover, in May 2007, the New Zealand Journalists Training Organisation (JTO) hosted a forum on "Reporting Diversity," which examined diversity issues facing New Zealand newsrooms and featured a keynote address by Arlene Morgan.⁵⁴

Similarly, a symposium entitled "Journalism Matters," assessing the state of the journalism in New Zealand, was hosted in August 2007 by the Engineering, Printing and Manufacturers' Union.⁵⁵ This symposium featured an address by Dr Judy McGregor, Equal Employment Opportunities Commissioner for the Human Rights Commission, who drew considerable attention to the lack of diversity in the New Zealand media, claiming "the

⁵³ *Sunday*, 20 July 2007; *Mediawatch* 26 August 2007; *Insight* 11 November 2007)

⁵⁴ New Zealand Journalists Training Organisation Forum on Reporting Diversity, 15 May 2007. [online] <http://www.journalismtraining.co.nz/noted.html>

⁵⁵ Journalism Matters Symposium, Wellington, 11-12 August 2007 [online] <http://www.journalismtraining.co.nz/publications/enoted/newenotedaug31.pdf>

representation of ethnicity and diversity in the mainstream media defies business case arguments and represents a fault-line in New Zealand journalism - one of its own making.”⁵⁶

Indeed, the Human Rights Commission, in its *New Zealand Diversity Action Programme*,⁵⁷ outlines a ten-step plan to strengthen our cultural diversity, which emphasises, in step six, a need to foster diversity in the media. “Our media need to reflect and promote the diversity of our society, both through greater diversity in the mainstream media and through the strengthening of Māori, Pacific, and other ethnic media to give voice to all New Zealanders” (www.hrc.co.nz).

Ethnic Minority Media – the Dilemmas

The seemingly counter-productive effect of a successful, flourishing ethnic media sector resulting in *decreased* mainstream media attention to minority issues and interests, as argued by Morgan above, is one dilemma facing ethnic minority media. As Husband (1994: 2) argues, “while the demography of specific ethnic minority communities makes it both viable and necessary to have print and broadcast media operating within community languages, and addressing the particular concerns of these communities, media apartheid cannot be condoned. A public sphere that operates through parallel and exclusive communication cannot promote dialogue between fellow citizens.” Accordingly, this thesis has adopted the concept of ethnic minority media representing a ‘complementary’ public sphere.

Spoonley (2004:20) highlights certain needs met by accessibility to immigrant-specific media, including “help in the adjustment process, the provision of important information, and the maintenance of cultural and linguistic identities.” Crucially, he argues, “they provide an important alternative to the mass media and the information it supplies”

⁵⁶ McGregor, J. Address to the “Journalism Matters” Symposium, 11-12 August, 2007 from www.journalismtraining.co.nz/publications/enoted

⁵⁷ “Ten Steps To Strengthen Our Cultural Diversity.” From the *New Zealand Diversity Action Programme* forum at Parliament, 24 August 2004. Human Rights Commission [online] <http://www.hrc.co.nz/home/hrc/newsandissues/tenstepstostrengthenculturaldiversity.php>

(ibid). However, he too questions the extent to which such media contribute to a common public debate about a culturally diverse and inclusive society. Citing Mahtani (2000), Spoonley discusses the dilemma over the role of migrant-specific media – do they help adjustment and settlement or do they in fact encourage introspection within the community and constitute a barrier to adjustment? (ibid: 19).

Another dilemma accordingly lies in their essential role. Husband and Riggins have each published widely on the role of ethnic minority media in ethnic survival and on the media needs and rights of ethnic minority communities. Riggins (1992) bases his discussion on Subervi-Velez's (1986) concept of a "dual role" of ethnic minority media, in which he asks: are they tools of cultural preservation or do they surreptitiously contribute to the assimilation of ethnic minority audiences into the dominant culture?

Riggins (1992: 276) concludes the long-term effect of ethnic minority media is some moderate degree of cultural preservation that represents a compromise between the two extremes. Features of ethnic minority media which, he argues, may induce audience assimilation include:

a) The Implicit Dominant Ideology

Riggins explains two sources through which a *dominant ideology* infiltrates ethnic minority media:

1. Minority journalists are not in a position to sever all intellectual ties with the dominant culture and are accordingly "bound to create some content with assimilationist implications" (ibid: 279).
2. Not all content of ethnic minority media is created by minority journalists. "Indeed, in many cases, extensive use is made of information sourced and produced by mainstream journalists and it is not uncommon for ethnic minority media organisations to hire outside their ethnic group" (ibid).

b) Intellectual Ghettoisation

Restricting media attention to one minority group might be considered *intellectual ghettoisation* and may arguably be counterproductive in the sense “the target audience may tire of content that does not appear to present new information” (ibid.). It is rare, however, for the content of ethnic minority media to concentrate exclusively on one group, primarily because majority actions and issues need to be discussed and addressed.

c) An Inclusive Definition of the Target Audience

This is one which defines the potential minority audience as broadly as possible, thus incorporating linguistically or culturally marginal people. Riggins argues marginal groups are likely to be more integrated into the majority culture (ibid: 281).

Riggins then suggests features of ethnic minority media that may *counter* cultural assimilation, including:

a) The Explicit Counterideology

Research into mainstream media has shown most of the public pays “shallow and intermittent” attention to the mass media and there would be no reason to assume ethnic minority media audiences are any different. “As minority group members are likely to be depicted in assertive postures as agents of change rather than victims of change initiated by others, it is reasonable to hypothesise ethnic minority media make their greatest contribution in the direction of resisting assimilation” (ibid: 282).

b) The Use of Minority Languages

Case studies indicate ethnic minority media are making a significant contribution to the continued survival of minority languages. Ethnic minority media give the younger generation an opportunity to relate to role models speaking their native language (ibid).

c) The Establishment of a Minority News Agenda

Audiences generally accept the media's news agenda. In operating their own media, ethnic minority groups are empowered to establish their own priorities in terms of news and information gathering and dissemination. Resources may therefore be allocated to news stories more relevant and pressing to the community itself (ibid: 283).

d) Announcements of Community Events

The capacity to broadcast and print announcements provides a vital link within the community, one which would not be achieved by word-of-mouth alone (ibid). In Auckland, for example, with minority communities becoming more geographically dispersed, accessibility to minority media may indeed increase the interactional density of communities.

e) The Symbolic Significance of Ethnic Minority Media

Possession of its own means of media production may be seen as "a public validation of a minority's sophistication or modernity. Community members may derive pride in the fact and, in some subtle way, strengthen their determination to resist assimilation" (ibid). Hindi-language radio station, Radio Tarana, for example, proudly advertises it has recorded ratings of nearly 5% audience share across the entire Auckland commercial radio market, rating ahead of some of the better-known commercial radio stations.⁵⁸

f) Activism by Media Organisations and Journalists

Ethnic minority journalists achieve a high profile within their community as a result of their extensive skills in writing and public speaking. "Often they will be spokespeople for their communities on issues impacting on the community, for example. Such skills and experience can become a life-long asset for their communities" (ibid).

⁵⁸ "Indian Radio Station Among Top Ten," *Indian Newslink*, 15 June 2009 [online] <http://www.indiannewslink.co.nz/index.php/homelink/3180.html>

Riggins concludes with a cautionary appraisal of the promise and limits of ethnic minority media. In proposing policies for meeting the challenge of maintaining and succeeding in the field of independent, ethnic minority-specific media production, Riggins highlights its anticipated limitations, the most obvious being the ability to survive long enough to have any significant impact (ibid: 285).

Within a political context, should ethnic minority media be expected to function as a means through which migrant communities can absorb political information and convey community-specific needs and aspirations to politicians, local body representatives and policy-makers? Should they be expected to provide a channel for dialogue about becoming an active participant in economic, social, civic, cultural and spiritual affairs? These are key questions and the case study analysis in Chapter Six examines the extent to which these expectations were fulfilled via South Asian media in New Zealand during the 2008 election campaign.

Politically Engaging South Asian Communities through Ethnic Minority Media

Speculating on the 2008 election, New Zealand Herald columnist Lincoln Tan declared in his column of 13 August 2007, “[t]ech-savvy politicians will win the Asian vote” (www.nzherald.co.nz). A year prior to the election, Tan urged local politicians to “start connecting with the Asian communities in their native language, through podcasts and blogs and hiring political assistants who can participate in ethnic web discussions by putting their views across on their behalf” (ibid.). He emphasised census figures indicated Asian voters would play a far bigger role in coming elections than ever before and the tokenism shown by political parties taking out last-minute advertisements in ethnic publications during previous campaigns would prove “too little, too late” (ibid).

Articulation of such concerns echoes sentiments expressed at a conference held in Auckland in July 2005 to discuss Asian participation in New Zealand's electoral system ⁵⁹ (www.elections.org.nz). Sponsored by the Elections New Zealand, the event was attended by around 100 mainly Asian people and featured an ethnically-diverse range of keynote speakers, who voiced concerns and issues on civic participation, particularly by the so-called "1.5 Generation," or Asian-born migrants raised in New Zealand.

Titled "Minority versus Power: Asian Electoral Participation," the conference featured two South Asian⁶⁰ speakers, Indo-Fijians Bharat Jamnadas, senior reporter for *Asia Down Under* at the time, and Robert Khan, Managing Director of Radio Tarana. Khan explained, "the role of ethnic media is to educate the community about the election process and make them to be (sic) heard through the democratic process rather than staying in isolation" (ibid.). Commenting on Radio Tarana's extensive political opinion polling within the Indian community in conjunction with *Indian Newslink* in the lead-up to the 2005 election, Khan explained the polls aimed to "measure the popularity and interest of the listeners and to create a platform in what the community thinks. This has given the community an edge in knowing what political awareness they have" (ibid.).

Barat Jamnadas urged attendees to exercise their right to vote as New Zealand citizens. "[The] ethnic vote is becoming more important, which will help your future and the future of the children, who depend on many of us in New Zealand today. You should get involved and read what each party promises and figure out if these are sincere and possible. You must vote! By not voting, you are not only doing a disservice to yourself, but to the children for whose future you choose to come to the country" (ibid.).

In a report prepared for the Asia New Zealand Foundation in July 2005 titled *Engaging Asian Communities in New Zealand*, the distinction between a sense of 'belonging' and 'participation' was highlighted in relation to the experiences of a control group of migrants and new settlers in New Zealand. "Belonging and participation occur on

⁵⁹ "Minority versus Power: Asian Electoral Participation." Conference proceedings [online] <http://www.elections.org.nz/study/asian-electoral-participation-conf-proceedings.html>

⁶⁰ Includes Indo-Fijians, as defined according to the target audience of the media analysed in the case study

two different levels. For example, you can belong to one community (Malay) and yet participate in another because of a marriage partner (Indian). Participation involves larger involvement in society. The significant elements of participation include: education, voting, employment, and housing” (Asia New Zealand Foundation Report, July 2005: 24).

Significantly, the report identifies voting as the one area of participation that has seen the least coverage in the literature. As explained in the report, “[t]his is in spite of the fact that participants thought that voting [was] very important. Participants also considered it important that members of their communities get elected to represent their views” (ibid: 24). Their main reason for not voting was not knowing enough to make a wise choice. Reiterating Robert Khan’s perspective on the role of ethnic minority media in educating their community about the election process and allowing them be heard through the democratic process, it can be assumed migrant-specific media *need* to adopt an educative, promotional, even coercive role in encouraging civic participation, and specifically voting, among their migrant communities.

Based on the normative assumption above, the case study presented in Chapter Five tests the hypothesis that South Asian media in New Zealand represented a vital public sphere for informing and engaging their migrant communities in the 2008 election, in public political debate, and in the democratic process in general, based on an assumption that this engagement may be achieved more effectively and to a greater extent than by the mainstream media. Formulation of the case study research methodology and question design is based on the aforementioned criteria identified by Fraser (refer p. 42):

- (1) Multicultural societies require more than a single, comprehensive public sphere to enable participation by groups of “diverse values and rhetorics.”
- (2) Participation means being able to speak in one’s own voice in order to express cultural identity through idiom and style.
- (3) Multiple public spheres allow the existence of alternative opinions and social identities.

These criteria, in conjunction with the normative assumption that migrant-specific media need to adopt an educative, promotional, even coercive role in encouraging civic participation, and specifically voting, among their migrant communities, provide a clear set of indicators by which to support or challenge the research hypothesis of this thesis. The presence or absence of each indicator within the resulting case study dataset will thus determine the strength of the hypothesis.

Chapter Four now presents the theory of the research methodology applied in the case study, outlining quantitative and qualitative research approaches, the rationale for, and validity of these approaches, and ethical considerations in conducting cross-cultural research.

Chapter Four

Research Methodology

The complexities inherent in both inter-disciplinary and cross-cultural research necessitate careful consideration of the research methodology to be applied. This thesis draws on theory from the disciplines of both political science and mass communication. Moreover, it involves the examination of migrant political engagement by a “cultural outsider ... a researcher who is culturally different to those being researched” (Spoonley, in Davidson and Tolich, *ibid*: 53). Combining both modes of research in a single research project arguably poses significant challenges. However, this thesis is resolutely guided by the goal of social research, “to improve the way we understand the social world” (*ibid*: 16).

According to Tolich and Davidson’s overview of the roles of research, these being: (1) exploratory, descriptive, or explanatory, and (2) basic or applied, this thesis embodies the functions of descriptive, applied research (*ibid*: 14 -16): As *descriptive* research, it “allows us to gain an insight into the nature of a particular issue,” (*ibid*: 15) while its *applied* research function suggests it is “designed with a practical outcome in mind. It applies research to achieve some specific goal” (*ibid*: 15).

Hence, as stated in the concluding remarks in Chapter One, this research project aims to provoke critical consideration of the citizenship engagement challenges and communications needs facing new migrants in New Zealand. Within the theoretical contexts of multicultural citizenship rights and the role of the media as a public sphere in democratic societies, this thesis accordingly addresses the key research question:

In what ways and to what extent do ethnic minority media represent a vital complementary ‘public sphere’ for informing and engaging migrant communities in public political debate and the democratic process?

Further questions raised in Chapter Three (refer p. 51) within the discussion on theoretical perspectives on the role of ethnic minority, provide a supplementary analytical framework for testing the hypothesis:

1. Within a political context, should ethnic minority media *be expected* to function as a means through which migrant communities can absorb political information and convey community-specific needs and aspirations to politicians, local body representatives and policy-makers?
2. Should they *be expected* to provide a channel for dialogue about becoming an active participant in economic, social, civic, cultural and spiritual affairs?

The testing of the above is reflected in the questions to both the key informants and the focus group participants, as discussed later in this chapter.

In terms of research approaches, limited academic literature exploring migrant political engagement, particularly within the context of Aotearoa New Zealand, poses challenges for the researcher attempting to select the most effective methodology to be applied in such a research project.

How Has Migrant Political Engagement Been Studied?

Research conducted into the engagement of migrant communities in New Zealand over the past decade, as examined below, has invariably focused on issues of settlement, integration, acculturation and identity. While first-language retention features as a thread through each of these focus areas, the issue of participation appears to have attracted less consistent attention. A report commissioned for the Asia New Zealand Foundation in July

2005, titled *Engaging Asian Communities in New Zealand*,⁶¹ highlights four significant elements of participation: (1) education; (2) voting; (3) employment; and (4) housing. With regard to voting, the report concedes:

“[o]f all the areas of participation covered [in the report], voting has seen the least coverage in the literature. This is despite the fact that participants thought that voting [was] very important. Participants also considered it important that members of their communities get elected to represent their views, although this was not a position universally held.”

Engaging Asian Communities in New Zealand (2005: 24)

Within its policy recommendations, the report urged Asian peoples to become actively involved in policy developments and processes (ibid: 33). Its programme recommendations emphasised professional development for community leaders at local and regional government level [which] aimed to help legitimise groups and enable leaders to represent migrant community needs and motivate those in the mainstream to get things done, including: (1) media training; (2) the democratic system; (3) how groups can influence change; and (4) how to access funding (ibid: 34).

Research methodology in the compilation of the Asia New Zealand report was based on the following rationale:

“ [i]ndividual testimonies are an important and vital part of understanding migration, and drawing on migrants’ stories, in a variety of forms, is becoming a key methodology in migration studies” (ibid: 5)

The project accordingly sought the stories of new migrants in Aotearoa New Zealand, ultimately involving migrant participants from Auckland, Hamilton, Palmerston

⁶¹ McGrath, T, Butcher, A., Pickering, J, and Smith, H., 2005, *Engaging Asian Communities in New Zealand*, Asian Communities Report for the Asia New Zealand Foundation [online] <http://www.google.co.nz/search?hl=en&q=%E2%80%9CEngaging+Asian+Communities+in+New+Zealand&btnG=Google+Search&meta=cr%3DcountryNZ>

North, Wellington and Christchurch. The research team elicited information through focus groups and interviews, using facilitators and interviewers who were part of the ethnic communities they were leading to avoid cultural misunderstandings. “In some cases, interviews and focus groups were conducted in the first language of the group and translated into English” (ibid: 5).

Overall, seventeen general focus groups and ten individual interviews were conducted, involving a total of 94 participants – 45 male and 49 female. A further 26 specific and 10 general interviews were conducted and a total of 21 ethnic communities represented (ibid: 5).

The researchers highlighted their reasons for involving predominantly recent migrants in their research project, namely “this is where issues of engagement and settlement are arguably more common” (ibid: 6). This thesis accordingly adopts such rationale for selecting recent migrants for the focus group component of the research.

Important considerations for this thesis are based on those highlighted in the report’s section on *Limitations of the Research* (ibid: 6):

- (1) The research involves ‘engagers’; that is, those who are involved in their own communities and across other communities
- (2) It involves those who took time to participate
- (3) It could be argued the participants are also well-educated – that may be reflected in their twin ability to give time and to articulate their experiences
- (4) The vast majority of participants are aged between 30 and 50 years old, thus neglecting to consider the experiences of the elderly or the young
- (5) It was beyond the nature and scope of the research to fully, fairly, and specifically evaluate, background, and commend the efforts in engaging Asian communities made by local councils, non-governmental organisations, and community groups

The report concludes that programmes to engage with diverse communities “should be supported by sound policies that support multiculturalism, encourage the awareness of

Asian languages and cultures, build and develop community skills, provide high quality training and resources, and work across agencies” (ibid:35).

Based on the above rationale regarding migrants’ stories becoming a key methodology in migration studies (refer page 57), this thesis applies such an approach to its methodology. It also draws on methodology highlighted in a 2008 report commissioned by the Ministry of Social Development, as discussed below.

Exploring the Migrant and Refugee Experience in New Zealand

Prepared by the Ministry of Social Development’s (MSD) Strategic Social Policy Group in July 2008, a report titled *Diverse Communities – Exploring the Migrant and Refugee Experience in New Zealand*⁶² combines existing data and research findings on migrant and refugee outcomes in New Zealand, and highlights areas where those outcomes have potential impact on social cohesion (Ministry of Social Development Report, 2008: 2). The report is intended to help researchers and officials with planning for future areas of research, and may also be useful information for any future related policy work in this area (ibid: 2).

Particularly useful within the context of this thesis, is the report’s section on participation, namely its introductory description of participation as:

“...a domain of social cohesion [which] includes involvement in social activities, in community groups and organisations, and in economic, cultural, political and civic life (such as voting in elections or participating in consultation or submission processes) (ibid: 46).

Significantly, this section refers to the level of political engagement by migrants, arguing it may be influenced by people’s experiences before they move to New Zealand (ibid: 47). The report explains there is little data available to show level of voter turnout by

⁶² Ministry of Social Development Report, July 2008. *Diverse Communities – Exploring the Migrant and Refugee Experience in New Zealand* [online] <http://www.msd.govt.nz/documents/about-msd-and-our-work/publications-resources/research/diverse-communities-migrant-experience/migrant-experience-report.pdf>

different migrant and ethnic groups in New Zealand, but highlights New Zealand is one of the few countries that enable migrants and refugees to vote as permanent residents as well as citizens (ibid.).

Participation in Political and Civic Affairs

As suggested in the report, levels of engagement in the political process, particularly voter turnout, provide an indication of the extent to which migrants feel part of the political process and trust political institutions (ibid: 71). Migrants' pre-arrival experiences may influence their level of participation in political processes. For example, some migrants do not come from countries with democratic processes and may have been exposed to corruption or oppression, while others come from countries that are more similar to New Zealand. Accordingly, focus group discussion questions for the case study in this thesis sought to elicit data on interest in voting and politics in participant' home countries.

The MSD report highlights 2005 Electoral Commission indications that very little research data is available on the levels of political engagement of different ethnic or migrant groups in New Zealand society (ibid: 59). It also emphasises that one factor that may make it easier for migrants and refugees to participate in the political process is that New Zealand is one of the few countries in the world that allows people with permanent resident status to vote (i.e. citizenship is not required), and that some migrants may not realise having residency means they are able to vote. The Electoral Commission provides its services in multiple languages to promote awareness of the political process (www.elections.org.nz).

Of significance to this research project is the report's section on migrant political participation beyond voting in local and national elections, emphasising "[m]igrants in New Zealand are involved in other aspects of the political and civic processes, including participating in central and local government consultations, preparing submissions on proposed legislation and local government proposals, and encouraging government agencies to engage more actively with refugee and migrant communities in policy development and

service delivery” (MSD Report, *ibid.*) This section examines levels of migrant representation in national and local government, and other bodies, indicating relatively low, but rising levels of representation (*ibid.*).

Migrant Media

Significantly, the report argues migrant media can help in the settlement process by providing contacts and information for migrants and refugees in their own language (citing Spoonley and Trlin, 2004), (*ibid.*: 104). It can also contribute to cultural and language maintenance. As with first language use, the prevalence and use of migrant media provides a mixed picture of social cohesion. The report claims heavy reliance on migrant media may impede connections being made with what is happening in the wider community. An increase in migrant media could also be a response to migrants not feeling that their interests are adequately represented via mainstream media or that they believe that mainstream media is not providing an accurate picture of migrants or immigration issues.

Ethnic Minority and Migrant Media in New Zealand

The report cites statistics related to, for example, the number of hours of ethnic radio programming in New Zealand each week - in over 60 languages on 17 radio stations (citing Ministry for Culture and Heritage, 2004), (*ibid.*: 104) - and the number of newspapers and magazines that cater to Asian (both migrant and New Zealand-born) community needs (citing Spoonley and Trlin, 2004), (*ibid.*: 105). It also refers to programmes on TV1 that focus on Asian and Pacific communities, for example, *Asia Down Under* and *Tagata Pasifika*, and emphasises that the Internet has become an important media source for migrant communities (*ibid.*).

However, personal research over an eighteen-month period from early 2007 to mid-2008 revealed ever-changing developments in the South Asian media sector in New Zealand, and citing statistics published in 2004 and 2005 arguably serves only a limited purpose within this context. For example, the web-based publication *The Global Indian*, which had been originally selected as a subject for media monitoring for this case study, published its last issue in March 2008⁶³ while the programme, *Darpan, the Mirror*, which had featured regularly on Triangle Television, ceased to broadcast as a television programme in April 2008 and now broadcasts only as a web-based production targeting an (ethnically) broader audience.⁶⁴ Radio Tarana, selected for content analysis in this thesis case study, is identified in the *Diverse Communities* report, which explains “Radio Tarana was established in 1996 and is New Zealand’s first full-time commercial ethnic radio station. A 2005 Nielsen media survey reported the station drawing in 5% of Auckland radio listeners, and being the first Asian radio broadcaster to be officially rated in Auckland’s mainstream radio market. This station provides more local content than a number of other stations which focus on issues from ‘back home’ (2004 AC Nielsen Radio Ratings)”⁶⁵ (ibid: 107).

⁶³ Refer <http://www.theglobalindian.co.nz/uploads/Mar08.pdf> The Global Indian resumed publication (unexpectedly) with an issue in October 2008. However this was too late and unexpected, and therefore not considered for the case study.

⁶⁴ Syed Akbar Kamal, Programme producer, *personal communication*, 15 August, 2008)

⁶⁵ Updated ratings available from May, 2009. Refer footnote # 59

Theoretical Perspectives on Quantitative and Qualitative Research Methodology

Having examined a range of research approaches applied in the study of political engagement, this thesis now discusses theoretical perspectives on the social research methodology to be used in the case study, based on the findings of the research presented above and the approaches which would potentially prove most effective in the study of migrant political engagement through ethnic minority media. These approaches incorporate both quantitative and qualitative analysis - acknowledged traditions of social science research methodology (King, Keohane and Verba, 1994: 3).

The case study in this thesis strives to achieve ‘breadth’ through quantitative analysis and ‘depth’ through qualitative analysis (Tolich and Davidson, *ibid*: 122). King, Keohane and Verba (*ibid*: 4) emphasise the differences between the two traditions are merely stylistic and are substantively unimportant. The decision to combine the two approaches in this research project was prompted by their assertion, “[i]f we are to understand the rapidly changing social world, we will need to include information that cannot be easily quantified as well as that which can ... all social sciences require comparison, which entails judgments of which phenomena are ‘more’ or ‘less’ alike in degree (i.e., quantitative differences) or in kind (i.e., qualitative differences)” (*ibid*: 5).

Neuman (2006: 151) similarly emphasises the complementary nature of the two orientations, adding “it is best to appreciate the strengths each style offers on its own terms. In discussing qualitative and quantitative research designs, Neuman introduces the methodological process of *triangulation*: “the idea that looking at something from multiple points of view improves accuracy” (*ibid*: 149).

Triangulation

This thesis thus seeks to examine, from multiple points of view, the extent to which ethnic minority media represent a vital complementary public sphere for informing and engaging migrant communities in the democratic process. *Triangulation*, according to Fetterman (1989:89) is the essence of qualitative research's validity.

In discussing the process of triangulation as applied to social research, Neuman (ibid: 149) outlines four types: (1) triangulation of measures; (2) triangulation of observers; (3) triangulation of theory; and (4) triangulation of method (ibid: 150).

The fourth type of triangulation, that of *method*, is explained by Neuman as one which mixes qualitative and quantitative styles of research and data: “[t]he styles have complementary strengths. Because there is only partial overlap, a study using both is fuller and more comprehensive” (ibid: 150).

Davidson and Tolich (in Davidson and Tolich (eds.), 2003:34) similarly favour the concept of “complementary strengths,” as proposed by Neuman, arguing “if different sources of information are saying the same things, then the social researcher can have greater confidence that the findings are valid” (ibid: 34).

Neuman explains the ways *triangulation of method* can be used: (1) sequentially “first one and then the other”; (2) in parallel; or (3) both simultaneously (ibid: 150). In testing the key research hypothesis in this thesis case study, three methodological approaches to the collection of primary research data were selected. These comprised:

- | | |
|-----------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| 1) Focus group interviews | (qualitative analysis) |
| 2) Key informant interviews | (qualitative analysis) |
| 3) Content analysis | (quantitative analysis - newspapers) |
| | (qualitative analysis - radio) |

Focus Groups

In current social science research, three basic uses for focus groups are identified:

1. A self-contained method in studies in which they serve as the principal source of data
2. A supplementary source of data in studies that rely on some other primary method, such as a survey
3. Used in multi-method studies that combine two or more means of gathering data in which no primary method determines the use of the others (Morgan, 1997:2).

Morgan (ibid: 7-8), identifies two principal means of collecting qualitative data in the social sciences: *participant observation* (typically occurring in groups), and *open-ended interviews* (typically occurring with individuals.) With regard to focus groups, he explains (ibid: 8):

“As group interviews, focus groups not only occupy an intermediate position between these other qualitative methods but also possess a distinctive identity of their own. On the one hand, focus groups cannot really substitute for the kinds of research that are already done well by either individual interviews or participant observation. On the other hand, focus groups provide access to forms of data that are not obtained easily with either of the other two methods”

In this context, Morgan emphasises the importance of understanding the strengths and weaknesses of focus groups, further highlighting the need to do so in comparison to other qualitative methods (ibid: 8).

1. Compared to Participant Observation

Advantages

- the opportunity to observe a large amount of interaction on a topic in a limited period of time based on the researcher's ability to assemble and direct the focus group sessions
- a practical and efficient alternative to intensive and prolonged behaviour observation or when the need for rapid data gathering supersedes the need for depth and detail

Disadvantages

- In some sense unnatural social settings
- Limited to verbal behavior
- Consist only of interaction in discussion groups
- Created and managed by the researcher

2. Compared to Individual Interviews

Advantages

- Opportunity to observe interaction on a topic
- Provide direct evidence about similarities and differences in the participants' opinions and experiences as opposed to reaching conclusions based on analyses of individual interviewee statements
- Easier to conduct "less structured" interviews and turn the interaction in the interview over to the participants themselves
- Issues of depth can sometimes favour focus groups as individual interviews may be based on an assumption the interviewee has more to say than he/she actually does

Disadvantages

- Interviewer has less control over direction of the interaction
- Less information able to be shared by individual participants
- Require greater attention to the role of the moderator
- Provide less depth and detail about the opinions and experiences of any participant
- The moderator may influence the group's interactions

Focus Group Research Design

The focus group design adopted and implemented in this research project was based on a number of "rules of thumb" highlighted by Morgan (ibid: 34) which capture the most common choices that researchers have made regarding how the data is to be collected: a) use

homogeneous strangers as participants; b) rely on a relatively structured interview with high moderator involvement; c) have six to ten participants per group and; d) have a total of three to five groups per project. Morgan cautions against using these rules as a standard about how focus groups *should* be done, recommending they be viewed as a descriptive summary about how they *are often* done (ibid).

In accordance with the abovementioned guidelines, this case study intended to include three focus groups each comprising five participants. These focus groups were to proceed in the form of a loosely-structured interview based on thirty questions to be made available to the participants prior to the focus group. ‘High moderator involvement’ would be reflected in the notable level of guidance provided by the researcher in the capacity of moderator/interviewer.

It was anticipated that achieving an assembly of ‘homogeneous strangers’ as participants, as suggested by Morgan above, would pose a greater challenge. For this research project, three liaison persons were approached to provide details of, and access to, prospective participants for the three separate focus groups planned for this study. However, while the liaison persons were urged to provide prospective participants who were ‘strangers,’ this step of the process was, to a significant extent, beyond the control of the researcher. Indeed, Morgan concedes it may not “even [be] realistic to try to recruit groups of strangers in [a] particular research setting” (ibid: 34).

Formulating Questions for the Qualitative Research Interview

Within the process of focus group research design exists the formulation of appropriately-phrased questions to elicit the most useful and substantive data. In terms of the preparation and compilation of discussion questions, this thesis sought to elicit data regarding ethnic minority media consumers’ perspectives of the role of ethnic media and the extent to which these participants accessed, and were engaged by, these media.

The case study drew on the discussion question framework formulated by Sheerin (2007) in a University of Canterbury masters thesis exploring youth political efficacy in New Zealand. Questions regarding identity and belonging were similar to those of Sheerin and were:

Identity

1. How do you identify yourself in terms of ethnicity in official New Zealand documents?
2. How do you identify yourself in terms of ethnicity in social or informal situations?

Participation and Belonging

3. How do you feel about being a New Zealand citizen / permanent resident?
4. Are there any issues that affect your sense of belonging in New Zealand society?
5. In what ways do you feel you have participated, or do participate, politically in New Zealand?

The aim in posing questions about identity was to elicit individual perspectives on the broader term ‘Asian’ and whether the migrants interviewed considered themselves Asian or ‘South Asian’. The motive for such questioning was to establish any possible connection between this community’s perspective of its own identity and the establishment of ethnic- or migrant language-specific media as an alternative public sphere.

With regard to identity, the challenge in wording the questions was to do so without posing the question directly: *Do you consider yourself Asian or South Asian?* As is evident in the focus group responses discussed in Chapter Five however, this question proved somewhat confusing to many participants, particularly those with lower English proficiency, and did not succeed satisfactorily in its aim.

With regard to participation and belonging, the motivation for posing the above questions was to establish any connection between low level participation and a lower sense of belonging, and a lack of means of communication, particularly political communication.

Within the analytical framework and principles of Fraser's multiple public sphere theory, questions about identity and belonging relate to all three principles, but particularly principle number (2) *Participation means being able to speak in one's own voice in order to express cultural identity through idiom and style*. Analysis of focus group responses according to this principle is presented in Chapter Six.

Focus group questions pertaining to ethnic minority media were formulated in the wake of extensive personal contact with migrant community representatives while coordinating the Elections New Zealand Roadshow 2008⁶⁶. These sought to elicit migrant perspectives on the existence of, and accessibility to, South Asian-specific media.

A necessary step in designing the focus group question structure for this case study was in the informal pre-testing of a selection of core questions. In contrast to the structured nature of quantitative research questionnaires, a need for greater flexibility exists in qualitative research questionnaires in order to elicit more substantive data and "get people talking, preferably along the thematic lines of the research" (Tolich and Davidson, *ibid*: 148). While the authors do not emphasise a necessity to pretest qualitative questions, as they do with quantitative surveys (*ibid*: 142), the decision to pretest for this case study was taken in anticipation of the potential language barrier that may exist.

For this case study, pre-testing was conducted on an informal basis by raising the subject of the 2008 election with migrants while on the Elections New Zealand Roadshow 2008, and subsequently posing a selection of specific questions extracted from the proposed set of thirty questions. In retrospect, and in accordance with guidelines presented by Tolich and Davidson (*ibid*: 148) regarding restricting the list of questions to one page, a selection of the research questions could have been omitted. This is discussed further in Chapter Six.

⁶⁶ Migrant attendees at electoral education workshops were asked about the media (mainstream and migrant) they accessed to gain electoral and political knowledge, and about their confidence about, and interest in, the election and voting.

Recruitment Issues

Morgan argues “inadequate recruitment efforts are the single most common source of problems in focus groups research projects” (Morgan, *ibid*: 38). He outlines several means of recruiting participants, including telephone screening interviews and questionnaires. Also highlighted is the subject of incentives and inducements for participants. For this research project, the decision on inducement was guided by a recommendation from one of the three liaison persons approached to co-ordinate local participants, who suggested participants receive retail gift vouchers as a token of appreciation for their willingness to participate. This request was ultimately honoured.

Moderation Issues

Fern (2001: 73-9) devotes an entire chapter of *Advanced Focus Group Research* to the subject of the focus group moderator - those who facilitate or lead the focus group discussion. He addresses issues of a moderator’s desired background characteristics, style, and analytical skills. In discussing moderator backgrounds for racial/ethnic focus groups, Fern also addresses the situation of all-minority focus groups being facilitated by “white” moderators (*ibid*: 78).

In discussing the decision over whether to utilise a focus group moderator, Fern explains, “[in] several applications of group research, the moderator may not be critical to the process” (*ibid*: 78), and presents procedures for encouraging self-moderation and leadership. However, he argues qualified moderators are critical for most applied research (*ibid*: 79). Addressing the issue of professional versus amateur moderators, Fern highlights three key reasons for not engaging the skills of a professional moderator:

1. Limited supply
2. Prohibitive cost
3. Cultural appropriateness: an amateur moderator from the same cultural background may be preferable to a professional moderator who lacks experience with the relevant population

The most relevant of these in this research project was prohibitive cost. However, the decision to moderate the focus groups personally considered not only cost, but also the non-commercial status of post-graduate university research. The engagement of a professional moderator was not deemed necessary. Anticipated challenges of moderating the focus groups were:

1. Language barrier
2. Distraction of the presence of an interpreter
3. Managing dominant personalities

With regard to cultural appropriateness, personal association with the three liaison persons during a previous visit to Auckland in the capacity of Electoral Education Co-ordinator with the Electoral Commission⁶⁷ assisted in overcoming this barrier. This prior association arguably commanded a sufficient level of professional status from the perspective of both the focus group liaison person and the participants to be recruited. Further to the discussion on cultural appropriateness, as introduced by Fern, it is necessary to address this issue within a New Zealand context.

The Ethics of Cross-cultural Research in Aotearoa New Zealand

As stated, the appropriateness of cross-cultural research, that is research being undertaken by a researcher culturally different from those being researched, has been challenged by some theorists. Spoonley (2003: 53) questions whether cross-cultural research should even proceed if the researcher is culturally different from those being researched.

“Given the centrality of tangata whenua issues and the growing cultural diversity of the country, the relevance of cultural identity and traditions to individuals and

⁶⁷ *Elections New Zealand Electoral Education Roadshow '08*. I was employed on contract with the Electoral Commission as the co-ordinator of the Elections NZ Roadshow '08 from February to July 2008. This involved liaising with migrant community representatives, particularly in Auckland, and several of the contacts established during the Roadshow were followed up in the organisation of the focus groups

communities, and the growing importance of culturally related policy concerns, research and researchers must inevitably deal with cultural difference. Yet such research is fraught, especially as it tends to be driven by a particular understanding of knowledge and it has such important consequences for the communities involved (ibid: 51).

However, the decision to proceed with a cross-cultural research project despite such cautionary advice was guided by Spoonley's concluding comments urging the researcher to consider the concept of cross-cultural research as a partnership, emphasising "the power which resides with research and researcher in an information age needs to be shared" (ibid: 61). Preliminary contact with ethnic media representatives and migrant community spokespeople suggested genuine enthusiasm for the project.⁶⁸ The decision to proceed was further strengthened by personal professional experience earlier in 2008 as an electoral educator with the Electoral Commission⁶⁹ and resulting interaction with migrant communities throughout the country. As with the media representatives, the migrant community representatives with whom the proposed case study was discussed, expressed enthusiasm for the project and indicated a willingness to participate, in the event of being approached.

⁶⁸ South Asian media representatives were contacted in 2007 regarding their participation in a survey to elicit perspectives on the role of ethnic minority media in political engagement.

⁶⁹ Electoral Commission role as co-ordinator of the Elections NZ Electoral Education Roadshow '08, February – July 2008

Key Informant Interviews

Tolich and Davidson (ibid: 131) describe key informant interviews as interviews with the leaders and stakeholders for particular communities of interest “in order to gain insight into the structure of the cultures of the groups under study. They provide a quick way of canvassing the views of a collection of communities of interest.” In the context of this thesis, the ‘key informants’ were the managers and editors of the media examined within the content analysis section of the case study.

The selection of media managers/editors as key informants provided an important perspective within the triangular approach. As noted in Chapter Three under point (f) “Activism by Media Organisations and Journalists” (refer page 50), “[e]thnic minority journalists acquire a high profile within their community as a result of their extensive skills in writing and public speaking. Often they will be spokespeople for their communities on issues impacting on the community, for example. Such skills and experience can become a life-long asset for their communities” (Riggins, ibid: 283).

Managers, editors and journalists were invited to comment on their individual perspective of the role and responsibility of their media in politically informing and engaging their migrant communities, both overall and in the lead-up to the 2008 election in particular. They were also asked to compare the role and responsibility of their media in comparison to mainstream media, again overall, and with particular reference to the 2008 election campaign.

The perspectives offered by South Asian community representatives as key informants, although ultimately disappointing in number (refer Chapter Five), nevertheless proved insightful in evaluating the extent to which their migrant-specific media endeavour to *inform* their audiences politically. However, evaluating the extent to which these audiences are politically *engaged* by ethnic minority media necessitated input from ethnic media consumers themselves. In accordance with the *Engaging Asian Communities in New Zealand* report discussed earlier in this chapter (refer pp 54-56), “[i]ndividual testimonies

are an important and vital part of understanding migration, and drawing on migrants' stories, in a variety of forms, is becoming a key methodology in migration studies" (*Engaging Migrant Communities Report*, *ibid*: 5).

Accordingly, a selection of South Asian migrant community representatives in Auckland were invited to participate in one of three focus groups⁷⁰ conducted in Auckland during the 2008 election campaign. The insights and responses of focus group participants as the 'consumers' of ethnic minority media were then able to be compared against the responses provided by ethnic media representatives to assess the extent to which political engagement was being achieved. Again, the limited volume of information elicited restricted the level of analysis able to be achieved.

⁷⁰ Originally, three focus groups were to be conducted with different groups of migrants in Auckland. However, not long after being approached, the contact person for one of the three groups offered an apology regarding her availability to facilitate in the arrangement of the attendees, as she was scheduled to return to India soon after being contacted. As it transpired, however, on the day of the first scheduled focus group, a second impromptu interview was arranged at the same location and this consequently constituted a supplementary third discussion forum

Content Analysis

The third form of methodology completing the triangular approach applied in the case study was *content analysis*. According to Neuman, (ibid: 324) “researchers have used content analysis for many purposes: [including] to study ... trends in the topics newspapers cover and the ideological tone of editorials.” This thesis accordingly examined trends in political- and election-focused reporting in ethnic minority media in the lead-up to the 2008 election. Specifically, it examined political- and election-focused stories, talkback discussion, interviews, editorials, and electoral advertising in selected South Asian print and radio media in the seven-week period prior to Election Day, 2008.

Coding

Implicit in the application of content analysis is the implementation of a coding system, “a set of instructions or rules on how to systemically observe and record content from a text” (Neuman, ibid: 324). ‘Text’ can refer to “anything written, visual, or spoken that serves as a medium for communication” (ibid: 322), and Neuman specifies four characteristics of text content identified by a coding system: frequency; direction; intensity; and space. He suggests researchers measure from one to all four of these in a content analysis research project (ibid: 325).

A *quantitative* approach was applied to the newspaper analysis, which measured two of the above characteristics – frequency and space. Specifically, it measured the number of times in each newspaper issue a political or election-focused story, editorial, advertisement, or photograph featured, and the combined total space occupied by those stories, editorials, advertisements, and photographs. This calculation was represented as a percentage of the ‘total net news’ section of the publication, as explained in depth in the newspaper analysis below.

With regard to the radio analysis, each programme was analysed qualitatively rather than quantitatively, acknowledging the tradition of ‘talk radio’ wherein the host can assert considerable influence over the number and range of topics discussed within the assigned timeframe of the programme (Ross, 2004: 786). The nature of Radio Tarana’s current affairs programming lent itself more appropriately to a qualitative content analysis, and was examined according to the topics discussed and the ‘intensity’ of discussion and views expressed, as highlighted in Neuman’s four coding characteristics of text content above.

The objective of the content analysis was to reveal trends not only in political and election-focused reporting and advertising in ethnic minority media during the election campaign, but also in the political engagement of readers and listeners. The latter was assessed, to a limited degree, according to the specific topics discussed by phone-in callers to *Radio Tarana*. A more comprehensive analysis of audience engagement overall would ideally have included issues covered in the *Letters to the Editor* section of *Indian Newslink*, *Kuk Punjabi Samachar*, and *Kuk Hindi Samachar*.

Unfortunately, neither *Kuk Hindi Samachar* nor *Kuk Punjabi Samachar* features a *Letters to the Editor* section, while *Indian Newslink*, during the case study analysis period, did not feature a *Letters to the Editor* section due to publishing constraints. This had ceased as of the 1 September issue. According to editor Venkat Raman, this action had invited criticism from readers and the section was due to be reinstated soon after the election. Raman explained that each issue of *Indian Newslink* received at least 200 letters to the editor, averaging 15 letters a day.⁷¹

(Assistance with the translation of the Hindi- and Punjabi-language newspapers and radio recordings was provided by two doctoral students at the University of Canterbury.)⁷²

⁷¹ Venkat Raman, Editor, *Indian Newslink*, *personal telephone communication*, 14 October 2008

⁷² Translation was conducted at the University of Canterbury and involved the researcher sitting with the translator and transcribing while the translator read and translated, or listened and translated.

Newspaper Analysis

In establishing and implementing a specific coding system for the newspaper analysis component of this case study, it proved useful to analyse recent relevant New Zealand studies. Sharp (2004) examines *The New Zealand Herald's* most frequently reported policy issues between 1946 and 2002 (in Hayward and Rudd (eds.): 108-121.) She notes that, while there have been numerous overseas studies examining the content of newspapers during election campaigns, few detailed analyses have been conducted in New Zealand (ibid: 109). The quantitative measurement selected and applied by Sharp in analysing *New Zealand Herald* coverage of election campaigns between 1946 and 2002 was “column centimeters.” In her study, Sharp explores the following areas in detail (ibid: 108):

1. Party coverage
2. Presidentialisation
3. Editorial bias
4. Nationalisation
5. Trivialisation
6. Issues

With regard to methodical coding under these sub-headings, Sharp explains each newspaper article on the election campaign was coded according to the following (ibid: 109):

1. Placement: *inside page; page-one story; lead story;*
2. Geographical focus: *national, regional, or local story*
3. Party focus: *further coded as to whether they focused on party leader*
4. Game or substance: *‘winners and losers’ or policy, statements, manifestos*
5. Substance: *further coded according to issue*
6. Partisanship: *of editorials*

Unlike this thesis case study, Sharp’s study aimed not to quantify political-, issue- and election-focused reporting in newspaper coverage of elections, rather to show how

certain characteristics of election coverage had changed over time (ibid: 108). However, her areas of analysis and resulting coding categories provide a useful guideline for the analysis of South Asian media coverage of the 2008 election campaign. Of the six focus areas identified above, two are applicable to this case study: (1) *party coverage*; and (2) *issues*, while a third, that of *editorial bias*, is also applicable but not in terms of bias, rather in regard to whether editorials indeed focus on politics and/or the election during the campaign.

A similar study by Hayward and Rudd (2002) examined post-war coverage of election campaigns in the *Otago Daily Times* between 1946 and 2002 (in *Political Science*, vol. 54, no. 2, December 2002: 3-20). They too applied a “column centimetres” coding measurement identifying the following categories (ibid: 7-8):

- (a) A lead story on the front page (after 1952); or a page one story or an inside story
- (b) The story/part story was:
 - (1) *game*: news about winners and losers; power struggles between candidates whose political stands are of secondary importance; non-political campaign rituals and activities; attacks by one party on another party that were not about policy
 - (2) *substance*: news about policy statements made by parties and candidates, including election manifestos
 - (3) *background*: news about how the electoral system works; procedures for voting and enrolling; lists of candidates
- (c) The story/part story was nationally, regionally or locally focused
- (d) The story/part story was focused on the party leader or a political party or interest group
- (e) Editorials: coded quantitatively as pro-Labour/ National anti-Labour/National or mixed

Hayward and Rudd concluded that, “although the absolute amount of information on the horserace and hoopla of elections has increased [in the *Otago Daily Times*] over time, so too has the absolute amount of information on policy issues. Of course, readers may choose to focus on the former and skip over the latter – but at least the opportunity to become a more informed voter is available to ODT readers” (ibid: 19).

A quantitative analysis calculated on column centimetres, as applied in the Sharp, and Hayward and Rudd studies discussed above, was not applicable in this case study, as the number of words or characters per column varies between English, Hindi and Punjabi script. Similarly, the implementation of a *paragraph-based* coding measurement (Kahn, 1991) was not feasible in this content analysis, as the difference in script precluded the application of an accurate, paragraph-based comparison.

Accordingly, the quantitative coding measurement personally devised for this case study content analysis was *fractional sections per page*. This was arguably the most practicable quantitative coding method for comparing newspapers published in different languages. Newspaper pages were divided into eighths, then restricted to total ‘net news eighths,’ this being the total number of ‘news eighths’ per issue *excluding* sport, ‘Bollywood’ and full-page advertisements. Issue- and election-focused coverage was then quantified in eighths and its total calculated as a percentage of total net news eighths in order to determine the percentage of political and election focused coverage in each issue. The percentage totals across all ten issues (four *Indian Newslink*; four *Kuk Punjabi Samachar*; and two *Kuk Hindi Samachar*) published during the seven-week monitoring period of the 2008 election campaign were subsequently graphed and compared. This comparison revealed a disparity between the English-language and South Asian-language publications’ coverage during the campaign.

In addition to total fractional space, news stories featuring the fourteen most prevalent issues (including the election and voting); and party, leader and candidate coverage were quantified. Stories featuring Helen Clark and/or John Key were categorised according to whether they were front page or otherwise. The number of colour photographs of leaders and candidates was identified, as were election advertisements and *Elections New Zealand* ‘Orange Man’ graphics (www.elections.org.nz)

Radio Analysis

One of Auckland's two main Hindi-language radio stations,⁷³ *Radio Tarana*, 1386 AM, was the focus of the broadcasting component of this case study analysis. The station features a regular current affairs programme on Sunday evenings between 5pm and 6pm, hosted by Dr Parmjeet Parmar.⁷⁴ Callers are encouraged to phone in and discuss topical issues, while between callers, the host raises matters of community, regional or national concern or interest to generate debate. During the second half of the election campaign, the programme was extended to between 4.30pm and 7pm, depending on the availability and itineraries of those politicians interviewed (refer Chapter Five).

Radio Tarana's political and election programming was recorded via live streaming, and the number of callers tallied. Caller gender was also noted. The issue or issues discussed by each caller were noted, as were the issues raised by the host between callers. Any interviews with politicians or political candidates were timed and the issues discussed during each interview identified. Interviews with politicians or political candidates featured on the programme during the six-week monitoring period⁷⁵ were conducted in English. However, interviews with Hindi-speaking candidates Dr Rajen Prasad, Dr Ashraf Choudhary, and Mr Kanwaljit Singh Bakshi were conducted in Hindi.⁷⁶

The 9½ hours of programming recorded over the six-week period were translated from Hindi with the assistance of the same University of Canterbury doctoral student who assisted with the Hindi-language newspaper translation. The resulting data provided the basis for a comprehensive examination of *Radio Tarana's* political issue- and election- focused coverage during the 2008 election campaign. The summaries of each programme report the times and duration of interviews with political candidates, and the specific issues discussed in those interviews.

⁷³ The other is Radio APNA, 996 AM

⁷⁴ Refer <http://www.tarana.co.nz/team-tarana/radio-tarana/team-tarana.html> for presenter profiles

⁷⁵ The monitoring period for Radio Tarana consisted of six weeks, rather than seven, as its election programming commenced later than the newspaper issues.

⁷⁶ Confirmed by Radio Tarana, *personal telephone communication*, 27 March 2009

Research Indicators

To test the hypothesis, it is necessary to indicate what kind and degree of responses might be expected in the three parts of the triangular research approach if the hypothesis is to be supported. Research indicators were formulated in response to personal exploratory research conducted *prior* to the 2008 election campaign. This involved:

- (1) Familiarisation with local (Auckland-based) South Asian newspapers to establish the kind and extent of political coverage, letters to the editor, editorials, and advertising in each publication. In the case of Indian Newslink, back issues were available online (www.indiannewslink.co.nz) and thus provided evidence from the 2005 election campaign of the kind and extent of political coverage that might be expected during the 2008 campaign.

- (2) Familiarisation with Radio Tarana programming to establish the existence of any political forum broadcast on a regular basis. This was confirmed first by accessing the programming link on the Radio Tarana website at www.tarana.co.nz, then in a personal phone call with the radio station.⁷⁷ The next step involved tuning in to the programme to determine the number of callers that might be expected, the range of subjects, average length of call and whether any political figures appeared on the programme. Although the programme is broadcast in Hindi, there were sufficient English language references during each call, particularly from the host, to determine a broad idea of the topics being discussed.

⁷⁷ *Personal communication*, 27 August 2009

- (3) Personal informal discussions with new South Asian migrants⁷⁸ to establish any propensity to access South Asian media and/or to follow the 2008 election campaign and vote.
- (4) A discussion with the editor of *Indian Newslink*⁷⁹ prior to the commencement of the election campaign to establish the scope of his commitment to coverage of the election.

Accordingly, the research indicators formulated for the following case study are:

1. *Kuk Hindi Samachar* and *Kuk Punjabi Samachar* would be expected to feature stories on the prime minister and leader of the opposition at least once in each issue during the seven-week election campaign. They would be expected to feature stories on all South Asian candidates during the seven-week campaign. They would also be expected to feature electoral advertising for all South Asian candidates during the campaign. In terms of issue-focused reporting, they would be expected to feature stories on issues pertinent to the South Asian community, particularly in Auckland,
2. *Indian Newslink*, in accordance with coverage revealed during the exploratory research, would be expected to feature a higher level of political content than either of the above. In line with its 2005 election campaign coverage, it would be expected to feature regular editorials and election-focused comment, a minimum of one story on each of the prime minister and leader of the opposition per issue, and to feature stories on all of the South Asian candidates during the seven-week campaign period.
3. On Radio Tarana's political programme, a minimum of eight calls and one interview with a political figure would be expected during a one-hour

⁷⁸ These were conducted during the Electoral Education Roadshow '08, as indicated previously

⁷⁹ *Personal telephone communication* 27 August 2009

programme, as per the exploratory research. During a longer programme (closer to the election) a minimum of twelve calls would be anticipated and the possibility would exist for a second interview with a political figure. Issues expected to be discussed would be those that are current in the mainstream media and those pertinent to the South Asian migrant community. As per the exploratory research, these would be raised and guided by the host. Another indicator would be the extent to which electoral information is broadcast. In each of the six programmes, at least one reminder about the election date and how to enrol and vote would be expected.

4. Key informant interviews would be expected to reveal a commitment by all managers and editors to informing and engaging voters during the election campaign. They would be expected to respond in the affirmative with regard to whether they consider it their role and responsibility to do so. Support of the hypothesis would require responses from all four managers.
5. Focus groups would need to have at least four participants in attendance and participants would be expected to indicate they DO access South Asian media for political and electoral information. In terms of indicative frequency, they would be expected to access at least one South Asian newspapers at least once during the election campaign (given that the newspapers monitored for this case study are published fortnightly and monthly). To strengthen support for the hypothesis, it would be expected that participants access migrant-language newspapers more readily than the English language newspaper. No expectation to phone in to radio talkback would be imposed but an indication that participants listen to, and would be more likely to access, South Asian talkback than mainstream radio talkback would strengthen the argument that ethnic minority media represent a vital complementary public sphere for engaging migrants in the democratic process.

Validity and Reliability

Davidson and Tolich (ibid: 31-33) discuss validity and reliability in social science research and outline key fundamental questions for the researcher: (1) is the research design *valid* – does the research question accurately reflect the concept the researcher is actually looking for; and (2) is the measure *reliable*, or consistent? They then discuss *external* and *internal* validity, the former referring to the *generalisability* of the findings – can they be applied to another research project by another researcher - and the latter to the accuracy of the research project's design. Davidson and Tolich emphasise the best way of ensuring validity is to pretest the concepts and questions (ibid: 32). As discussed in the case study in Chapter Four (p. 65), pretesting in this research project was conducted informally, but the richness of much of the resulting primary research data arguably justified the selection of research questions and overall design.

Weber (1990) identifies four aspects of the content analysis process: measurement; indication; representation; and interpretation, and argues that, for each of the four processes, difficulties exist that may detract from their *reliability* and *validity* – reliability of the procedures and validity of substantive conclusions on which they are based (p. 70).

While the research indicators outlined above provide guidelines for testing the hypothesis, potential challenges to the validity and reliability of the resulting data exist and are discussed in the following chapters.

Chapter Five now presents the case study. It examines the ways and extent to which South Asian newspaper and radio media informed and engaged migrant voters during the 2008 election campaign, testing the hypothesis that ethnic minority media represent a vital complementary public sphere for informing and engaging migrant communities in public political debate and the democratic process.

Chapter Five

Case Study

The 2008 New Zealand general election campaign generated unprecedented interest in the “ethnic vote,” not only from politicians, but from both mainstream and ethnic minority media.⁸⁰ Journalist Michael Field opened his 18 October *Fairfax Media* opinion piece with the claim “an all-in political brawl is underway for Auckland’s big Asian vote amidst a belief Auckland’s Indian community is moving away from the Labour Party,” while in the same article, Korean-born National Party candidate Melissa Lee declared, “[p]eople are starting to realise how important the ethnic vote [is],” (Field, M. *Fairfax Media*, 18 October 2008).

This case study examined the so-called “ethnic vote” and the way it was covered by ethnic minority media during the election campaign of 2008. Specifically, it assessed the extent to which selected South Asian print and broadcast media, through their coverage of the election, represented a vital complementary public sphere for the expanding South Asian migrant community in Auckland to become informed and engaged in public political debate during the campaign.

As stated, primary research data for the case study was to be generated via three sources: (1) by conducting three focus groups⁸¹ with recent South Asian migrants in Auckland in the week prior to Election Day, Saturday 8 November, 2008; (2) through questionnaires to South Asian media managers/editors as ‘key informants’; and (3) through quantitative and qualitative content analysis of three local South Asian newspapers, and six

⁸⁰ Refer, for example, Field, M. “Politicians of all colours chase Auckland’s ethnic vote” *New Zealand Herald*, 18 October 2008; [online] <http://www.stuff.co.nz/vote08/4731922a28435.html>; Tan, L. “Tech-savvy politicians will win the Asian vote,” *NZ Herald*, 13th August, 2007 [online] http://www.nzherald.co.nz/section/story.cfm?c_id=280&objectid=10457280

⁸¹ As stated, the intention was to conduct three focus groups and the third was in the planning stages when its liaison person indicated at short notice she would be returning to India and no longer available to arrange participant attendance. Given the limited timeframe, the decision was thus made to reduce the number of focus groups to two. However, a third one-on-one interview was arranged spontaneously on the day of the first focus group and took place in the thirty minutes prior to the scheduled first focus group.

consecutive weeks⁸² of a once-weekly Hindi language political and current affairs radio programme.

Focus Groups

Reiterating the rationale applied in the *Engaging Asian Communities in New Zealand* study (refer p. 57):

“ [i]ndividual testimonies are an important and vital part of understanding migration, and drawing on migrants’ stories, in a variety of forms, is becoming a key methodology in migration studies”

(*Engaging Asian Communities in New Zealand*, ibid: 5).

Focus groups provide an invaluable opportunity for such ‘individual testimonies’ to be conveyed and as such, form a core component of the triangular approach to the research methodology applied in this thesis.

In terms of focus group preparation, it is helpful to re-emphasise Morgan’s “rules of thumb” (Morgan, ibid: 34) regarding how focus group data is to be collected, i.e., a) use homogeneous strangers as participants; b) rely on a relatively structured interview with high moderator involvement; c) have six to ten 10 participants per group and; d) have a total of three to five groups per project. This case study accordingly aimed to conduct three focus groups each comprising five to six participants who were ideally homogenous strangers. The focus groups would be facilitated by the researcher as moderator and based on a list of thirty questions which had been provided to all participants prior to the focus group (see appendix 1).

In the preparation stages, three key migrant community contacts were approached to act as liaison persons and source prospective participants. These contacts were identified as a

⁸² Due to technical difficulties experienced by Radio Tarana, the programme scheduled to be streamed live on 12 October 2008 was unable to be recorded, as the station’s live streaming facility was not operational at that time. Refer footnote # 98, p. 140 for full explanation.

result of previous personal contact with Auckland-based South Asian community representatives while on contract to the Electoral Commission as the co-ordinator of the *Elections New Zealand Electoral Education Roadshow 2008*.⁸³ This educative role involved extensive liaison with migrant community representatives throughout the country during the period from February to June 2008. During this time, certain South Asian liaison persons were approached and questioned about possible involvement in university post-graduate research focus groups later in 2008, in the lead-up to the general election.

Those approached at the time were receptive to being co-opted as prospective liaison persons, and were subsequently contacted for that purpose. It should be noted that, in accordance with University of Canterbury Human Ethics Committee guidelines and researcher agreement regarding the maintenance of privacy and anonymity of focus group participants, none of the liaison persons or participants is identified in this thesis, by name, organisational association, or community profile.

In alignment with the research aim of including migrants from the broadly-defined category of 'South Asian,' liaison persons were encouraged to approach and include, where possible or feasible, migrants from India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Nepal, Bengal, and Indo-Fijians. However, it should be emphasised that the ethnic diversity of eventual participants was ultimately beyond the control of the researcher, and dependent on both the efforts of the liaison persons contacted and availability of participants at the scheduled time and date.

Liaison persons were provided with an explanatory covering letter (see appendix 2) and a list of thirty questions covering five categories: (1) Identity; (2) Participation and Belonging; (3) Interest in Politics; (4) Attitudes towards Voting and Representation; and (5) Electoral Engagement and the Media. Both documents were subject to University of Canterbury Human Ethics Committee scrutiny in accordance with the committee's procedures for interviewing members of the public, and were approved. Each of the documents was to be forwarded by the liaison person to prospective participants in order that

⁸³ Refer footnote #67 p. 71

they be well-briefed and prepared for questioning. This was an important factor in the focus group process, given potential language barriers and the arguably challenging subject matter.

The explanatory covering letter emphasised that the researcher was to assume the role of facilitator and moderator. In the case of focus group two, the liaison person also offered to act as interpreter. In the case of the language school focus group, the school tutor/co-ordinator, upon request, indicated a commitment to discussing the questions with those students who had agreed to participate in the focus group, prior to the focus group being conducted. All participants were presented with a consent form to be signed and collected on the day of the focus group (see appendix 3).

Arranging the focus groups proved exceptionally challenging, with the geographic limitations and cultural and language barriers imposing a testing influence on the case study design and overall research outcomes. Consequently, Morgan's rule of thumb minimum of three to five focus groups and six to ten participants per group was not met. The final scenario, due to circumstances beyond the control of the researcher, resulted in one one-on-one interview and two focus groups, with one of the focus groups comprising just three of the five participants pledged by the liaison person. This result was regrettable and clearly limits the generalisability of the data produced.

Following are the analyses of two focus groups and one interview conducted with South Asian migrants in Auckland in the week of the New Zealand general election 2008. The combined focus group interviews totalled 91 minutes in duration. The analyses below outline the number and ethnicity of participants, and key comments from the resulting discussion as they pertain to the overall research question: in what ways and to what extent do ethnic minority media represent a vital complementary public sphere for informing and engaging migrant communities in public political debate and the democratic process?

Interview One

Tuesday 4 November 2008 10.30 am Duration 23 minutes

Interview One was conducted four days prior to Election Day at a private language school in west-central Auckland. It was arranged spontaneously by the assigned liaison person, who had expressed disappointment at the unavailability of two of the five participants whom he had arranged to attend the scheduled focus group on the day. As a compensatory measure, he offered a supplementary one-on-one interview with one of his administration staff – an Indian male migrant in his forties. The interview took place during the half-hour period available prior to the focus group scheduled for 11 am.

Unlike most of the participants within the focus groups, who were more recent migrants, the interview participant (Mr D) had resided in New Zealand for ten years, i.e., longer than the defined case study category of ‘recent’ (post-2001) migrant (refer p. 7). However, the resulting interview proved unexpectedly beneficial in that it provided the possibility for a comparative perspective - that of recent versus longer-term migrants - of the role of ethnic minority media in engaging migrants in the democratic process. It provided a further comparative perspective of longer-term migrants with limited English competence versus longer-term migrants with more proficient English competence (see appendix 4.1 and 4.2 for full transcripts).

With regard to participation and belonging, Mr D expressed a clear commitment to active participation in his adopted country:

“I am a New Zealand citizen and I have always, ah, thought it’s my adopted country so I do have a passion for things happening here and I want to participate actively and, ah, yeah, but still have those roots, Indian culture, Indian patriotism, but now I’ve had to share that with my adopted country.”

However, when invited to comment on any issues that may affect his sense of belonging in New Zealand, he expressed somewhat negative sentiments:

“...but ... in a negative way I do [find issues that affect my sense of belonging], how we are picked [on] ... when people comment on how you look or where you come from or the colour of your skin or ... I’m not trying to give you undertones of racism here, but they are there, they’re ... obvious.”

Mr D was clearly interested in politics, indicating a predisposition to voting and participating in the democratic process:

“...casting my vote every time I have the chance, and I feel, it’s not an obligation, but I feel that it’s important in the society that you live in, that you have a say, in who you elect and who you want to formulate policies...ah, I would say I am interested [in politics] and we keep discussing a lot of issues and things with my colleagues and others, so you wouldn’t categorise me under ignorant but I would say 90 percent.”

When invited to comment on any aspects of New Zealand elections and voting he might find challenging, Mr D claimed not to find anything challenging but offered an insight into migrant perceptions of New Zealand’s political system:

“I think there is a kind of a stereotype going on in the political scene here like the, ah, moment you mention Labour, they attach certain things to that, and the moment you say National, they attach a few things to that ... that’s a bit challenging for people who come from outside New Zealand, see, ah, they’ve been given to understand that Labour is this, this, this ... and National is this, this, this, which is not true ...”

With regard to perceived similarities in the policies of the Labour and National parties, he added:

“Everyone is trying to outbid the other by just increasing \$2 million more spending money on that ... basically same policy ... if it says I will give you, ah, 12 weeks for some package, the other one comes up and says I’ll give you 14 weeks, what’s the difference? So

basically that, that kind of subtle, ah, ah, blurry issues, if I may use that word, is kind of challenging for these people [who come from outside New Zealand]”

On the subject of attitudes towards voting and representation, Mr D expressed strong sentiments when asked how well he felt his interests and opinions, as a migrant, were represented by his local member of parliament, or by any member of parliament?

“None whatsoever, sorry to say that, no voice, I don’t think there’s an adequate voice of the immigrants because every election time you see somebody telling you you’re not wanted here, so you would, would you expect somebody to listen to your voice, and when you are working your butts out on the language and facing all sorts of slur and, and, ah intimidation, and you don’t have, you don’t get to say any of your opinions, or voice any of your opinions, still you go ... get out there and vote ... how, how does that sound? It’s almost like tying your legs, your feet and your hands and saying that that, ‘ok, eat the cake.’”

The discussion then progressed to the subject of electoral engagement and the media, in which Mr D was asked whether he accessed local, New Zealand-based South Asian media:

“Unfortunately no, because most of it is stale news, the news is not up to date and so I read New Zealand newspapers and *New Zealand Herald*, for that matter, and I read about my country’s politics online, ah, but at times I think here and there whenever I go to buy Indian groceries or something, you know, I pick up a newspaper.”

Mr D indicated he did not read Hindi-language newspaper, *Kuk Hindi Samachar*, nor did he access Hindi-language radio stations *Radio Tarana* or *Radio Apna*. The only South Asian media he accessed was *Indian Newslink*, although he admitted, “I wouldn’t say frequently,” and when questioned as to what information he was most interested in sourcing from South Asian media, Mr D replied:

“Honestly about India, not about local because I get all the information about things happening from *New Zealand Herald* and online news.”

When asked whether he would be more likely to write a letter to the editor of a South Asian newspaper than a mainstream newspaper, Mr D indicated a preference for mainstream media, adding:

“I feel that the South Asian newspaper wouldn’t do much. It might reach to the local Asian, local Indian people, but given the fact that it wouldn’t change much in the way people think about our representation, ah, I think most people would be discouraged to do it.”

Similarly, Mr D indicated a greater likelihood of phoning a mainstream radio station than, for example, *Radio Tarana*. However, in spite of not accessing local South Asian media to any significant extent, Mr D expressed strong sentiments when invited to comment on the availability of South Asian media in New Zealand:

“I think there are already some small papers existing but I think there is a greater representation desired and required because I still don’t think, in spite of a substantial percentage of ... Indians living in New Zealand, aren’t being represented properly and that’s not proper, ah, communication going on between, between the, the local New Zealand people, government, and the immigrants as such, ... so I think there is a lack of communication, you know, you can’t just come and go whenever you want, ... they are living in this country, they are contributing in their own way to this country and you want their votes but you should also listen to what they want to say and their voice and that’s the important thing, ah, yeah, so I think that that’s the need.”

Significantly, he considered it important for South Asian media to provide information about the election, voting, and political participation to new migrants:

“I think it is very important because a lot of people, as I said, the first thing to make it clear is the, ah, MMP, a lot of new, ... I don’t think even people who’ve been living here for six, seven years would understand that, they just go along and vote and they say red colour, blue colour, green colour, basically go and say, yeah, I’m voting National this time so they go and vote National, they don’t

know what's going to happen, even if that MP is not going to win that particular constituency, what's going to happen with his or her vote, I think that knowledge is important, that information, and so ... they send letters out, ah, before election, registration, voters' registration and things like that, that only gives you where to go and vote and the list of party candidates and that."

With regard to mainstream media representation and engagement of the South Asian community Indian New Zealand, Mr D added:

"...ah, you open the *New Zealand Herald*, how much do you read about immigrants or their works, or their problems or their issues, maybe in the editorial columns somewhere in small, you have these letters, people write to the editor, that's all, and now and then, once in three months if you get an article about it, mostly it would be about ... if they want to read about India, it would be about business, economy, IT centre, how India is doing, how it's impacting, that kind of thing rather than the local issues."

Finally, on the subject of whether he identified more with political candidates who advertised in South Asian media rather than in the mainstream media, Mr D declared:

"Honestly, I have to tell you I haven't seen these South Asian media so just ... yeah, no ... I'm well informed because I am in touch with mainstream."

Summary

Preliminary impressions following Interview One suggested the role of South Asian media as a public sphere for informing and engaging its migrant community in public political debate during the 2008 election campaign may prove less significant than anticipated. However, it remained to be assessed, through comparison with the subsequent focus groups, whether this migrant's length of time in New Zealand, i.e., 10 years, or level of English competence (clearly proficient), ultimately determined the extent to which he accessed South Asian media. Mr D conceded that, while he personally did not access South Asian media for political or electoral news, he deemed it "very important" for ethnic minority media to provide information about the election, voting, and political participation to new migrants.

It must be emphasised that Mr D was interviewed in a one-on-one forum and had resided in New Zealand for a period of ten years, thus not meeting the case study requirements of a *focus group* comprising post-2001 migrants. In terms of methodological validity, the above data is therefore clearly compromised in its applicability. However, it has been included to provide a wider perspective to this case study and for reference purposes for scholars of ethnic minority and migrant media.

Focus Group One

Tuesday 4 November 2008 11 am Duration 24 minutes

The first focus group was conducted four days prior to Election Day at the same private language school in west-central Auckland. As stated, the number of participants was to have totalled five, as indicated prior by the liaison person. However, on the assigned day, two intended participants were unexpectedly unable to attend. From a methodological validity perspective, this was clearly disappointing. The three participants in attendance were:

1) Mrs R

Ethnicity:	Indian
Length of time in time in New Zealand:	3.5 years
Age bracket:	20-30 years
First-time voter :	yes

2) Mr B

Ethnicity:	Indian
Length of time in New Zealand:	10 years
Age bracket:	30-40 years
First-time voter :	yes

3) Mrs Y

Ethnicity	Pakistani
Length of time in New Zealand:	3.5 years
Age bracket:	40-50 years
First-time voter :	yes

As ethnic identification represents an integral part of this case study, participants will be referred to in the analysis and transcript of Focus Group One as: *Indian man*; *Indian woman*; and *Pakistani woman* rather than by their title and initial (see appendix 4.2 for transcript).

To contextualise the findings of this focus group against interview one and focus group two, it is important to emphasise the unexpectedly limited English competence demonstrated by all three participants in focus group one, although they were presented with particularly challenging subject matter. Despite the thirty pre-sent questions having been discussed with, and explained to, prospective participants by the language school tutor (refer p. 87), the resulting interview transcript comprised a less detailed or comprehensible set of answers than those elicited in focus groups one and three. The participants' limited English proficiency proved significant in the overall analysis, however, as will be discussed in Chapter Six: Analysis of Research Data.

Focus Group Responses

The introductory section, featuring questions on *identity*, proved challenging for all participants, as evident in the researcher's repeated paraphrasing and explanatory elaboration (refer appendix 4.2). Section Two focused on participation and belonging, inviting participants to comment on their feelings about being a New Zealand citizen or permanent resident. All responded positively. With regard to the question "are there any issues that affect your sense of belonging in New Zealand society?" responses included:

Indian woman	Ah, when the someone should buy gun and like that one thing so I'm a little scare of the crime and little scare in New Zealand"
Indian man	Is my feeling is a good one, long time
Pakistani woman	Good, here is good, very good ... best

Question five, “in what ways do you feel you have participated, or do participate, politically in New Zealand?” required paraphrasing. Taking into account all were first-time voters, the question subsequently posed was, “how do you feel about the opportunity to vote in this election, as a new citizen?”

Indian man	I ah don't think so much, I'm thinking is a ... maybe there is a coming government, ah, Labour or National, is a good, everything is a good, but I ...I think so Labour is a coming ... but I'm not sure ... not sure
Researcher	[seeking clarification] You're not sure who to vote for ... is that what you mean?
Indian man	I'm not sure, ok, is it Labour coming or National coming ... I'm not sure
Indian woman	Ah, I want to vote for Labour because I am thinking Labour is helping to poor people ... I am thinking National is not, ah, interested in poor people ... National is for the rich people and I am seeing the Helen Clark is everywhere in Indian shop and Indian function event so I am feeling about positive about the Helen Clark so I love Labour
Pakistani woman	But, ah, I don't know more but, ah, it's a ... I like the ... I think who come, and going better to economy in New Zealand and everything for New Zealand better. He, ah, give a good service ... they give a good service

Questions pertaining to interest in politics and the election yielded a positive response, while those regarding continued interest in politics in each participant's home country revealed:

Indian woman	Ah, not me, I no ... I don't know anything about the Indian [politics] ... in the India, but now I
--------------	--

know something [about New Zealand politics]
and I'm talking about the politics about in class ...

Pakistani woman No, not interested [anymore]

Indian man Yeah same ... it's the first time in New Zealand
here I'm voting first time, but India I'm a lot of
time is voting

Participants, when questioned as to whether they found New Zealand politics easy to
understand, responded varyingly:

Indian man I don't think ... it's a not easy

Researcher Not easy?

Indian man No, not easy

Researcher What exactly ... what is difficult about ...?

Indian man Very difficult

Researcher The system? The MMP system or ...?

Indian man I don't know 'cause it's very ... I think it's a very
difficult

Researcher Compared with Indian ... compared with Indian
politics?

Indian man Yeah

Researcher Ok, same feeling? [addresses others]

Indian woman Um, I don't know about much more politics but I
am thinking it's good

Researcher Here?

Indian woman Yeah

Researcher Ok, so you understand the two ticks, you know,
two votes?

Indian woman Yeah, I ...

- Pakistani woman Yes, one is party vote and one is ..." [searches for word]
- Researcher** Electorate ... ok, so that message is getting through to migrants?
- Indian woman And, ah, I like to listen to about politics in *Radio Tarana*

The reference to *Radio Tarana* was made unexpectedly, and pre-empted discussion on South Asian media and electoral engagement. The comment was followed by a further reference to *Radio Tarana*:

- Researcher** What would help make New Zealand politics easier to understand, for you? What ... what do you think would help you to ... to make it easier to understand New Zealand politics?
- Indian woman I'm thinking it's *Radio Tarana* so I can ... I see in the TV so I don't understand much more, just little, but in *Radio Tarana* so it's my language so I can understand everything so that's a good way
- Pakistani woman Same thing
- Researcher** Same? So your own media, you mean?
- Pakistani woman Yes, our own media, in or ...
- Researcher** That helps?
- Pakistani woman Yes, but I originally Indian so it's in *Radio Tarana* is, ah, same [laughs]
- Researcher** Ok, same for you, *Radio Tarana*? [to Indian man]
- Indian man Yes

Discussion progressed to voting and Election Day, with all participants considering it important to vote and exercise their newly-acquired right to vote as permanent residents.⁸⁴ In particular, the Indian woman expressed the following sentiment:

Indian woman	And I want to ... I'm going for the voting so I want to take my daughter so ... so she can learn ... I can't learn in India so but she can learn here so ...
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With regard to adequate parliamentary representation of minority voices, participants considered the level insufficient and felt that if the Indian political candidates standing for election on 8 November were successful in their bid, a greater representation of South Asian voices would be achieved.

Questions regarding likelihood and frequency of accessing South Asian media revealed a tendency towards Hindi-language radio and newspapers, with both Indian participants indicating regular access to the Radio Tarana Sunday evening current affairs programme, hosted by Dr Parmjeet Parmar, analysed in this case study:

Researcher	Ok, now talking about the media, which you've already mentioned <i>Radio Tarana</i> , ok, do you listen to, or read local South Asian media ... <i>Radio Tarana</i> , <i>Indian Newslink</i> , <i>The Dawn</i> , <i>Kuk Samachar</i> ...?
Indian woman	More I like, I like <i>Radio Tarana</i> , so I can doing my work too and listen too, and it's easy for me
Researcher	Ok, and you can listen to Hindi and ... do you listen to Parmjeet's programme on Sunday night?
Indian man	Yes
Indian woman	Oh, yeah, yeah, yeah, last week I listen the Bakshi one programme

⁸⁴ After the focus group, the language school coordinator explained the Indian man had resided in New Zealand for a period of ten years and had thus been eligible to vote in previous elections. The 2008 election was, however, his first time voting in New Zealand.

- Researcher** So is that the media you listen to most ... you access most frequently ... radio? Do you read *Indian Newslink* or *Kuk Samachar*?
- Indian man *Kuk Samachar*
- Researcher** You read *Kuk Samachar*?
- Indian man Yeah, sometimes
- Researcher** You read *Kuk Samachar*? [to Indian woman]
- Indian woman No, I just listen
- Researcher** Just listen? And do you read the *Dawn* or *Kuk Samachar* [to Pakistani woman]
- Pakistani woman Yes, sometimes *Kuk Samachar*, radio also

Reference to “the Bakshi programme”⁸⁵ by the Indian woman was highly significant within the argument that ethnic minority media represent a vital public sphere for engaging migrant communities in the democratic process. When questioned as to her reasons for accessing South Asian media, she was quick to respond:

- Indian woman** Yeah, I ... first ah the last week I seen the Bakshi one but I can’t understand so I want to know what, ah, what happened this topic and so that’s why
- Researcher** Oh, yes, so you listened to Parmjeet’s ... on Parmjeet’s programme, the whole programme was about Bakshi
- Indian woman Yeah, yeah [laughs]
- Researcher** And people were phoning in about Bakshi
- Indian woman And, yeah, and one listener say, oh we are not talking about Mr Bakshi because Mr Bakshi is Indian so the Parmjeet say we are talking about the Winston Peters then they doing that thing and we are talking about

⁸⁵ Refer ‘Radio Analysis’ page 172 for the discussion on this particular programme, which aired on Radio Tarana on Sunday 2 November 2008

he, then why not we are talking about Mr Bakshi because he's Indian, I Indian doing when thing then I have to talking about that thing to Indian too

The Indian woman appeared to have accessed Hindi-language media to seek clarification and further information about a political issue [Bakshi immigration controversy] she had tried unsuccessfully to understand and absorb fully through mainstream, English-language media. Upon being questioned as to how they felt about having South Asian media in New Zealand, all considered it a “good” and “important” thing, particularly with regard to the election:

- | | |
|-------------------|--|
| Researcher | Ok, do you listen to mainstream media about the election at all? Or do you just listen to <i>Radio Tarana</i> ? If you want to know about the election ... I know you talk about it here at school ... do you listen to <i>Newstalk ZB</i> or <i>Radio Live</i> or ...anything about the election? Do you watch <i>TV1</i> or <i>TV3</i> ? |
| Indian woman | Ah, I watch the TV One too but I understand [only] a little but I can't understand more, so ... |
| Researcher | so <i>Tarana</i> is better because it's in Hindi? |
| Indian man | Yes |
| Indian woman | Yes |
| Researcher | Do you think it's important for <i>Radio Tarana</i> and <i>Kuk Samachar</i> and <i>Indian Newslink</i> , for example, [to] provide information about the election ... to the Indian migrants and Pakistani migrants, and so on? Is it important? |
| Indian woman | Yeah |
| Researcher | Ok, and is that because it's using ... for example, because it's in Hindi? That makes a difference? You need the information in Hindi? |
| Indian woman | Yep, yeah |

Indian man [nods]

Pakistani woman [nods]

Significantly, all participants considered mainstream media *do* include migrants in election discussion and that South Asian voices are represented. All had watched the final leaders' debate the night before the focus group. As a final question, in response to the fact that it had been raised during the discussion, each was asked as to what extent their information about the election had been sourced from Radio Tarana:

Researcher Ok, alright, so just thinking about Indian media, South Asian media, and the election on Saturday, do you feel like most of your information about the election came from *Radio Tarana*?

Indian woman Aah ... [hesitates]

Researcher Most of the information that you wanted to get together came from *Radio Tarana* ... or *Indian Newslink* ... or half and half?

Indian woman I'm thinking yes

Researcher Mainly Radio Tarana?

Indian woman Yes

Researcher [to Indian man and Pakistani woman] Same?

Indian man No, ah ...

Researcher Half and half?

Indian man Yep

Pakistani woman Not more, less than half but not more and more, why [because] it's not all candidates and issues

Researcher No? It's just the mainly the Indian ...?

Pakistani woman Mainly, yes

Researcher

And Helen Clark and John Key have been interviewed on Parmjeet's programme

Pakistani woman

Only the two parties so it's a come on to one by one so we see on TV and understood everything, so it's good

The closing remarks by the Pakistani woman were significant in regard to the question posed in the opening paragraphs of this thesis, "do ethnic minority media encourage migrant communities to conduct independent political debate within their own media?" (refer page 1). Her comments about not accessing more than half of her election information from *Radio Tarana* because "it's not all candidates and issues ..." are of particular significance. However, she was the only focus group participant to express such sentiments, and further research could probe this particular issue in more depth.

Summary

Although the level of English-language proficiency of the three participants in this focus group was unexpectedly low and consequently proved challenging for the researcher attempting to elicit articulate and substantive responses to sometimes complex questions, this factor ultimately proved significant in the findings of this research. This is discussed further in Chapter Seven. Interesting aspects of Focus Group One were that all participants were first-time voters clearly intending to vote and that, in relation to understanding New Zealand politics, *Radio Tarana* was referred to without prompting.

Subsequent communication with the language school tutor/co-ordinator to seek clarification on a number of questions revealed a growing tendency, in his experience, for migrants who had managed to “survive” in New Zealand for many years on very limited English, to “suddenly turn round and want to learn English.”⁸⁶ The tutor also explained that the Indian man had attained a notably lower level of education than Mr D of Interview One. This fact arguably explains the disparity in English proficiency between the two Indian males, both of whom have resided in New Zealand for a period of ten years. The propensity to access South Asian media is thus clearly dependent on a range of factors, not only on how recently one has migrated to New Zealand.

⁸⁶ *Personal telephone communication*, 27 March, 2009. In accordance with University of Canterbury Human Ethics Committee guidelines regarding protection of the identity of focus group participants, neither the tutor nor the language school can be identified.

Focus Group Two

Thursday 6 November 2008 3pm Duration 44 minutes

The second focus group was conducted two days prior to Election Day at a community centre in South Auckland.⁸⁷ This focus group comprised participants with a significantly more proficient level of English and, as revealed in several of the discussion question responses, a higher level of education.⁸⁸ As a result, the discussion proved lively and in-depth, yielding several lengthy, well-articulated responses. It also generated robust debate over particular issues.

The number of participants scheduled to be present at the start time of 3pm was to have totalled eight including the interpreter, as indicated prior by the liaison person.⁸⁹ However, on the assigned day, one intended participant was unable to attend, while another was required to depart and return to professional duties soon after the scheduled start time. Two participants, (Mrs K and Mr B), arrived towards the latter part of the discussion.

In spite of these variables, interview data was ultimately collected from the originally intended total of eight participants. The participant unable to attend was available to be interviewed by telephone just prior to, and slightly beyond, the scheduled 3pm start time, while the participant needing to leave subsequently provided interview responses via email. Rather than be presented separately, the data from these two interviews is included in italics in the analysis presented below. The eighth participant, the liaison person, was present in the capacity of interpreter but was ultimately drawn into the discussion and indeed contributed invaluablely to the focus group.

⁸⁷ In accordance with University of Canterbury Human Ethics Committee guidelines regarding protection of the identity of focus group participants, neither the liaison person nor the community centre can be identified

⁸⁸ Refer summary on page 105 for explanation on the level of education of focus group one participants

⁸⁹ Information regarding the names and ethnicity of intended participants was provided by the liaison person via email communication on 24 October 2008

The six⁹⁰ participants attending in person comprised:

1) Mrs I

Ethnicity:	Indian
Length of time in time in New Zealand:	9 years
Age bracket:	50+ years
First-time voter	second

2) Mrs N (interpreter)

Ethnicity:	Indian
Length of time in New Zealand:	6 years
Age bracket:	30-40 years
First-time voter	second

3) Mrs R

Ethnicity	Pakistani
Length of time in New Zealand:	5.5 years
Age bracket	40-50 years
First-time voter	second

4) Mr L

Ethnicity	Pakistani
Length of time in New Zealand:	5.5 years
Age bracket	40-50 years
First-time voter	second

5) Mr B

Ethnicity	Indian
Length of time in New Zealand:	6 years
Age bracket	40-50 years
First-time voter	second

6) Mrs K

Ethnicity	Indian
Length of time in New Zealand:	11 years
Age bracket	40-50 years
First-time voter	fourth

⁹⁰ It should be noted that for most of discussion, Mr L spoke for his wife, Mrs R, as evident in the transcript, refer appendix 4.3

The two participants unable to attend were:

7) Mrs M

Ethnicity	Indian
Length of time in New Zealand:	1.5 years
Age bracket	40-50 years
First-time voter	yes

8) Mr G

Ethnicity	Indian
Length of time in New Zealand:	7 years
Age bracket	25-30 years
First-time voter	yes

Focus Group Responses

As with interview one and focus group one, the introductory *identity* questions yielded brief responses indicating most participants identified themselves as per their ethnicity, rather than as ‘South Asian’ or ‘New Zealander’, in both official and informal situations. Only one, Mr L, indicated a propensity towards using the term ‘South Asian’ rather than Pakistani, but this was case-dependant.

All responded positively to the question regarding personal feelings about being a New Zealand citizen or permanent resident. However, the second of the *participation and belonging* questions, “are there any issues that affect your sense of belonging in New Zealand” generated one profound, and indeed protracted, response:

Mr L	Yes, I mean I’m ... I mean I’m reasonably qualified, and experienced, far more better than so many people those who are local around this place and my those qualifications although formally authenticated, and verified from the New Zealand Qualifications Authority, and my experience is not at all recognised around this place so throughout my stay around this place although I have tried to labour on, I am not appreciated, not been given a place in the society. New Zealand is not MIS-using only, New Zealand is DIS-using the
------	--

talent of the migrants, the people though they have come from abroad, ... there's a ... ah ... lot of prejudice, very less openly but definitely in the minds, under the currents, under the tables, and all over the society, they just don't recognise it, they just do not open their minds, People, those who are here let's say at some stage, of course we are not undermining their experience and their situation and we are not come here to overrule them. To snatch their bread and butter, we just need a reasonable, decent recognition according to one's own, qualifications and experience and situation. Please do not hurt them, do not disrespect them, do not underestimate them, and do not think that because they have landed here, they must be, you know, robbed and they must be humiliated, and insulted, and that's what is going on ... and because of this thing there is definitely there I mean ill-feeling and resentment, and recently you might have seen that people are flying away, from New Zealand ...

The above is merely a selected extract, and does not reflect the full length and depth of his plea for tolerance and acceptance. Evidence of frustration among other focus group participants over the sentiments expressed is seen in the interruption to the 'monologue' by Mrs N, "more questions please..." and later in the discussion:

- | | |
|-------|---|
| Mrs N | [interrupts] These issues are interesting to you but these issues they are actually concerning, we can go into ... <i>you</i> are interested in this but... |
| Mr L | Yes, I am interested, that is what I am saying |
| Mrs N | But there are other persons... |

With regard to interest in politics, participants responded positively, indicating a keen interest:

- | | |
|-------------------|---|
| Mr L | [speaking for Mrs R] She does vote, yes, she tells others as well, definitely |
| Researcher | Not only general elections, like this Saturday, but also local government elections? |
| Mr L | She definitely votes herself and she tells any person who comes ask to them that who is good and why it is good and then accordingly she tries to inspire them. She is doing, definitely I know |

- Researcher** So same, you're more active than...?
- Mr L 100 percent I am, and I do, I do make a comparative, not just superficially, I make a proper comparative
- Researcher** So you inform yourself, you read about the candidates?
- Mr L Yes, I read a lot, I write, I speak, and I, I mean, I get into proper discussions with my work colleagues, with other people also
- Researcher** Ok, is that to learn – is that to help influence others or is that to help get people involved?
- Mr L Get people involved, yes
- Researcher** So are they mainly migrants you're talking about?
- Mr L No, they are mixed, all kind of mixed people
- Mrs R By supporting [a] party, yes
- Researcher** And voting obviously in local body, ah council elections too?
- Mrs R Yes
- Researcher** And then in the general election this Saturday?
- Mrs R Yes
- Researcher** Thinking about New Zealand politics, both the general election and local body, how interested are you, [Mrs I], how interested are you in New Zealand politics?
- [interpreter explains]
- Mrs I Ok
- Mr G Good interest in politics. Government and local politics within the communities*
- Mrs M Just only listening to news, not active*

All continue to follow politics in their home country, and indicated their source of political information as follows:

- Researcher** So just thinking about politics in your home country, how do you access information, is it through the Internet, or is it through, do you receive overseas newspapers, or...?

- Mr L Here, you are talking about?
- Researcher** Yeah, living here and...
- [interpreter translates]
- Mr L Ah, we speak on telephone, we get Internet papers, I mean scan the papers, or we just sit in the groups and chat and we know, say things coming up
- Researcher** About Pakistani politics?
- Mr L Yes, or as TV or something
- Mrs I Internet and Indian newspaper
- Researcher** Ok, so it's actually an Indian-based newspaper that comes to New Zealand?
- Mrs I Yes

Progressing to the subject of New Zealand politics, issues and complexity of the voting system prompted the interpreter (Mrs N) to join the discussion and share her experience:

- Mrs N Well, I don't know if you are including me ...but I found it very difficult to understand MMP
- Researcher** Yes, and you're not the only one
- Mrs N And I got myself educated, I went to an MP and said "please explain it to me, I am not finding it easy" ... I had to so.
- Researcher** Oh, good on you!
- Mrs N And after coming to this role of [name of role withheld], I just decided to educate the community and we did hold some workshops
- Mrs M Easy in the sense that a person like me can listen to the radio. Easy to listen on any channel every hour and BBC.*
- Mr G Easier than politics in India*
- [Researcher: What would help make it easier to understand?]*
- Mr G Media can help understand the politics better if they provide the right information for the readers or viewers*
- Mrs M If I want to I can easily understand but I'm so interested in just having knowledge*

With regard to issues or public debate participants found interesting, sentiment again proved intense:

Mr L Ok, the top of the line is – law and order and crimes, how to check it, and of course, give a reasonable ah, latitude, a reasonable some kind of ah, permission or responsibility for self-defence and there you cannot really ...single it out the person who's being attacked, or who's been attacked, and who's under threat that he should you know start going according to the book, and I mean ah start looking at it, how much force I have to use it, in that given situation and in the heat of that momentum, it's simply impossible that you can exactly draw a line, and who would ascertain it, what is the line, who would ascertain it, that is very important again, and I mean it's a very sta ... thing, your home is being attacked...
... secondly, that people those who are contributing their things, maybe it is superannuation, it's a KiwiSaver, or any other things come up at any some stage later on, no incoming government, and no incoming administration must have, they must not infringe on it, in on it, people have given a mandate

Researcher No interfering?

Mr L Not interfering, yes, that's very important, I just it's a simply ridiculous, today we are contributing suppose, for example, for our KiwiSaver, nobody should have a right to do, I will cut this much and I will do that much and I will, I mean this thing so they should initially, suppose 700,000 people have contributed, they should give them a proper write-up, a proper thing, take their consent, take their, I mean, opinion, ok, we are going to cut it, or we want to cut it, this is our plan, what is your opinion, are you agree with it, do you agree with it, or you don't agree?

Researcher Are you talking about politicians who are going to be in power?

Mr L Yes, exactly, why not, that's my money, I am contributing to that, how the hell they have the right, to do it, ok we'll cut this much and we'll put there and we'll put here, it's a daylight robbery, people are ... those who are contributing

Further issues were elicited in response to prompting:

Researcher Ok, so law and order, taxation, self-defence, law and order and self-defence, taxation, KiwiSaver, [Mrs I]?

Mrs I Women[s] issues, family violence issue[s]

Researcher Ok, so women, family violence ...

- Mrs N And crime, of course
- Mrs M *Crime, what happens to criminals ... and economic breakdown, what do they plan to do ... and tax*
- Researcher** And crime, so law and order, is crime number one?
- Mr L Of course, it's number one, definitely,
- Researcher** [to Mrs R] Same?
- Mrs R Same, yes
- Mrs I Yes

A fifth participant, Mrs K, joined the discussion at the point of questioning over continuing to vote in one's home country, and suggested it is possible if one holds dual citizenship. Participants were then questioned about elections, voting, and representation in New Zealand:

- Researcher** Which aspects of New Zealand elections and voting do you find challenging, if any?
- Mr L It's a very simple, straight-forward, very clear
- Researcher** Are there any parts of this election this Saturday that you're thinking, ooh, that's a bit ... that's hard?
- Mrs I No
- Mrs N For me it's hard to choose ... the candidates [laughs]
- Researcher** Ok, so the choosing is ... really the only thing that's hard is the choosing?
- Mrs N Yes
- Researcher** Ok, and a lot of...
- Mr L There's no hard at all for me. It's a very simple straight-forward, absolutely
- Researcher** So that's your opinion, everyone's allowed an opinion
- Mr L Absolutely, yes

- Mr G* *Party vote ... how MPs get selected and how many parties get how many seats*
- Mrs M* *I don't know yet, it's my first time*
- Researcher** And how well do you feel your interests and opinions are being represented by your local member of parliament ... and when I say "your," I mean as migrants, how well do you feel migrants' opinions are represented by your local member of parliament?
- Mrs K* I think it's ok
- Mrs N* I think it's important
- Researcher** Do you think your local member of parliament speaks for migrant communities?
- Mr L* Yes, definitely
- Researcher** Represents your opinions in Parliament?
- Mrs K* Yes
- Mrs I* Okay
- Mr G* *Not sure*
- Mrs M* *They try everywhere, they do give importance, whether or not it's accepted in the Parliament, it's another story*

Progressing to the subject of ethnic diversity and the role of ethnic minority media in engaging migrants in public political debate, the discussion elicited a range of opinions:

- Researcher** And how well do you think New Zealand's Parliament represents New Zealand's ethnically diverse population?
- Mr L* Good
- Researcher** We're a very multicultural society now – does our Parliament represent that?
- Mrs I* Yes
- Mr L* It's reasonable
- Mrs N* It should be more, it should be more
- Mrs K* Especially with the target for next year

Mr G They are not even close when it comes to representing ethnically-diverse population

Mrs M I think they do take every community together with them

Researcher So, you think after Saturday, Parliament might be more ethnically diverse?

Mrs N I would like to see women migrants representing more in Parliament

The discussion then focused on South Asian media and reasons for accessing different forms of these:

Researcher Do you all access South Asian media?

Mr L It's ok

Researcher Do you prefer English-language South Asian media or your own language South Asian media?

Mr L Both of them

Mrs I Both of them

Researcher So you access all of it?

Everyone Yes

Researcher You listen to *Radio Tarana*?

Everyone Yes

Researcher Listen to *Apna*?

Everyone Yes

Mrs N [to Mr L] Do you have Urdu newspapers?

Mr L No

Mrs K [to Mr L] *The Dawn*

Mrs N [to Mr L] You can't read in Punjabi?

Mr L No

Mrs K [to Mr L] Even *Dawn*?

Researcher *The Dawn* is in English

- Mrs I *The Dawn* is English but Indian community newspaper, *Newslink* is also Indian community papers
- Mrs K But some of them they read Punjabi also, Pakistanis
- Mrs I It's ah good in Punjabi, yes
- Mrs N Reading, yes, but speaking, I don't know about it

[Conversation all together in Hindi]

The private discussions in the Hindi language over various South Asian media proved animated, and debate appeared robust. When questioned as to which South Asian media they accessed most frequently and for what purpose, participants provided an interesting perspective on the role of *migrant language* media in their adopted country:

- Researcher** Which local South Asian media do you access most frequently? Which do you read or listen to the most?
- Mr L *Apna*, radio is *Apna* or *Tarana*,
- Researcher** You listen to *Apna* more than *Tarana*?
- Mr L No, mainly equally you can say, yeah, just same
- Mrs L Yes
- Mrs I *Tarana*
- Mrs M* *Tarana*, because it is in Hindi
- Mr L English *Indian Newslink* and *Tarana*, those kind of...
- Researcher** Oh, so all equal?
- Mr L Yes
- Mrs I *Tarana*
- Researcher** *Tarana* the most? You listen to *Tarana* the most? Do you get your news from...?
- Mrs I Sometime 990
- Mr L *Apna*, that's called *Apna*
- Mrs N For me it's *Tarana* and *Kuk*

- Mrs K *Tarana and Kuk*
- Mr G *Kuk newspaper and Indian Newslink newspaper*
- Researcher** *Tarana and Kuk Samachar?*
- Mrs K Yes
- Researcher** Which information are you most interested in sourcing or obtaining from ... Why do you access South Asian media? What is the main reason?
- Mrs K** I think language. Naturally you go to your own language

The language issue was probed further, and yielded an insightful perspective on the significant role of migrant-language media, both written and spoken, for migrant communities in New Zealand:

- Researcher** So it's the language... that is the key reason?
- Mrs I The language, yes
- Mr L It's not the language only, but the contents as well, because in the mainstream media, you find their coverage is proportionately, of course, I mean, very less for us, even if you go to the *New Zealand Herald*, the page which they call as "world," ok, you will find in one corner one small news or any news which is of their interest, I mean media also has an interest, not for the public's sake, they want to highlight and project some issue which might not be very much interest of me, but it is from media point of view their interest, and they will, you know, explain and highlight it in a more, ah, I mean a broader way as compared with the one which really I every day read, so that way we focus on I mean the other those small community newspapers ... where they ...
- Researcher** You mean the, you mean the English, the ... like *Manukau Courier* or...?
- Mr L No, not at all, Manukau doesn't...cover us
- Researcher** Do you mean the South Asian media?
- Mr L South Asian, yes
- Researcher** Ok
- Mr L South Asian papers like, ah, you know there are a few in English and a few in this, ah Punjabi

- Mrs N When you said, why do we access to this, for me radio is for entertainment and political debates, and the newspaper is because it contains the language
- Mrs K The language and basically it's the script and most of what I have experienced of this, most of people want their children to access this script, you know,
- Researcher** The Hindi and Punjabi script?
- Mrs N No, not only this
- Mrs K Yes because the children go to the temples, and to the mosque and Gurudwara for the learning language
- Researcher** Ok
- Mrs K Because language also

In addition to the matter of access to written and spoken Hindi and Punjabi, the issue of accessing *Radio Tarana* for political debate was raised and explored further:

- Researcher** So that's interesting [Mrs N] you said about political information, so you access *Tarana* for entertainment and political information?
- Mrs N Yes, two things, yes
- Researcher** [to everyone] And same?
- Mrs N And read the newspaper, let me finish please, because this is ... the news I can get on Internet also maybe or somewhere but to read it and sometimes the community news which no other paper is covering it
- Mrs K It covers...
- Mrs N Those community news covers those things and I would like, I would really appreciate if something from *Kuk* or *Indian Newslink* or *Dawn*, the ethnic newspapers, if one spread is introduced in *NZ Herald* at one stage

With regard to the likelihood of writing a letter to the editor of a South Asian newspaper rather than a mainstream newspaper, all participants indicated they would be more likely to write to, for example, the *New Zealand Herald* than *Kuk Samachar*, but also conceded it

would depend on the issue – a mainstream newspaper if it were a national issue and a South Asian newspaper for more South Asian community-related issues. However, in regard to phoning South Asian, rather than mainstream talkback radio, the accessibility of spoken Hindi language proved significant:

- Researcher** And it's the same, for example, would you be more likely to phone, for example *Radio Tarana*, you know Parmjeet's programme, she invites you to phone in about political issues, would you be more likely to phone her programme than, *Newstalk ZB*, about politics, or is the same?
- Mrs K No, no it's a ... people talk to the *Newstalk*, it's depend on...
- Mrs N The mainstream language [is] like [a] barrier
- Researcher** So you would feel more comfortable phoning and speaking in Hindi?
- Mrs N Yes
- Mrs K Of course
- Mrs M I do ring Tarana, yes*
- Mrs I Yes
- Mr G I have been approached by the local ethnic radio station but never by a mainstream commercial radio station*
- Mrs K There's one more thing I would like to say so, what is like a law and order, and it's a crime, if we want to go to the mainstream also, and discuss in their own media also,
- Researcher** Ok, so, the language would be an attraction for phone-in *Radio Tarana* or *Apna*?
- Mrs N Yes, *Tarana* or *Apna*, yes

The end of the focus group generated insightful discussion not only on the role, but also the future, of ethnic media in New Zealand:

- Researcher** Yep, so how do you all feel about the existence of South Asian media in New Zealand? Do you have a strong feeling about it, that's important? It's a vital connection?

- Mr L Yes it is important, it's a vital connection and it is still in the process of development
- Researcher** Evolving?
- Mr L Evolving, yes
- Researcher** Where do you see it going? Do you see it...?
- Mr L We'll see a future as real definitely promising, and it will have a, I mean a strong impact on the South Asian community
- Mr G It is good – they provide an opportunity to reach out to the South Asian communities*
- Mrs M It's nice, it's like being in your home country*
- Mrs K I feel so there's more, we need more media
- Researcher** If we had more South Asian media, would it become more um, segmented, you know, diluted?
- Mrs K No, not exactly because even Urdu language you don't have any, Pakistani they don't have any
- Researcher** So we don't have a Pakistani language...media in New Zealand?
- Mrs K No, maybe one TV programme, I think, I'm not sure but we don't have any script, you know
- Mrs N Well certainly we need, want more, Kirsten, I would like to see Urdu newspaper coming
- Mrs K Mmm
- Mr L Now, I'm grateful for her I mean, ah, sentiments and passion and I ... but at any some stage, because it's a comparatively small community, at any some stage if there is any kind of you know, effort, I would like to integrate with *Kuk* and Punjabi, any of the Punjabi papers

Progressing to discussion on interest in the election and source of electoral information, all participants expressed keen interest, indicating this was in part due to the increase in, and profile of, the South Asian candidates [at this point, Mr B joined the discussion]:

- Researcher** So, just thinking about the election, which media do you go to most for information, mainstream or South Asian, or both, depends on the...?
- Mr L Mainstream, mostly
- Mrs R Yes
- Researcher** Same or ... definitely mainstream?
- Mrs R Yes
- Mr L [interrupts] Yes, she's a ... mainly TV
- Researcher** One News, 3 News?
- Mr L Yes
- Researcher** [to Mrs I] Both?
- Mrs I Both, yes
- Researcher** So, for example, do you listen to *Radio Tarana's* political programme? You listen to the politicians, the interviews with the politicians?
- Mrs K Yeah, yes
- [Conversation all together in Hindi]
- Researcher** So you listen to...?
- Mr B So far as Indian points of view are concerned, I listen to *Radio Tarana* because they are Indian-oriented questions
- Researcher** Ok, and Indian-oriented candidates, as well, that they're featuring?
- Mr B Oh, they could be there because, you know, sometimes Helen Clark is on there and...
- Researcher** And John Key
- Mr B And other leaders are, and John Key was on the air, so...
- Researcher** Do you feel that the questions that Helen Clark and John Key are asked relate to South Asian interests?
- Mr B Yes, more or less
- Researcher** Ok, so more so than in the mainstream media?
- Mr B Yes, but so far as watching TV is concerned, I always go for One and Channel Three

Researcher So mainstream media, ok

Mr B Yeah

Exploring the core focus of this thesis and the role of South Asian media in informing and engaging their migrant communities in public political debate, participants were asked how important they considered it for South Asian media to provide information about the election, voting, and political participation:

Researcher Do you think it's important that South Asian media inform people about the election, inform people about the candidates?

Mrs K Yes

Mr B I feel it is their prime duty to do so

Researcher [to Mrs I] Same?

Mrs I Yes

Mr G Yes, new migrants, elderlies, people with English as a second-language find it useful

Mrs M Yes, they should and after the election, are they keeping their promises?

Researcher Ok, so it is the role of the ethnic media to do that?

Mr B Yes

Researcher And they should take that seriously? Should take that responsibility?

Mrs K Yes

Similarly, the question regarding mainstream media representation and engagement of the South Asian community in New Zealand revealed a clear depth of sentiment:

Mr B They do take us on board but still much needs to be done

Mrs N I feel the same, more...

Researcher More needs to be done? Representation?

- Mrs N Representation, involvement, engagement
- Mrs K I think I always go for that [mainstream] for my other point of view. When we go for the radio news or the national news or whatever, naturally we go to the mainstream
- Researcher** Ok
- Mr B I give you one example – yesterday I was watching Helen and John Key on TV, it was the final debate and I was just sorry to see that there was, ah, no South Asian representative on the panel. There were three, um, I mean editors and subeditors of different newspapers but nobody was representing South Asian viewpoint ... there should have been one
- Researcher** So there was no ethnic media representative?
- Mr B No ethnic, no
- Researcher** No?
- Mr B There was only lady from, I think BA group, [reference unclear] she was heading the ...BA group [reference unclear] but ah, nothing, no, should have been more

Finally, participants were asked about mainstream media's *political* engagement of the South Asian community:

- Researcher** Do you feel that the mainstream media are really drawing in the South Asian community?
- Mrs N More needs to be done
- Mrs I [laughs]
- Mr B I have seen some changes over the last six years. This is my second election I am watching so, lot of difference
- Researcher** Yeah, and do you....?
- Mr B People are more conscious, they are more proactive now
- Researcher** And do you think the changes are because the candidates are becoming more ethnically diverse?
- Mr B Yeah
- Researcher** And the ... a lot of the...

- Mrs K Issues are very, very important, not only the candidates
- Researcher** Yeah, do you feel, have a feeling that, this election, the parties are trying to draw in the ethnic vote?
- Mrs K Oh, yes,
- Mrs I Yeah, very high
- Mr B Oh, yes, very much, yes
- Mrs N Oh, yes

The focus group discussion concluded with participants being invited to comment on whether they considered ethnic media would have an effect on voter turnout in the 2008 election, and all were strongly in agreement.

Summary

Focus group two proved the most interactive and animated of the three discussion forums and accordingly, generated comparatively compelling, substantive data. This outcome could quite reasonably be attributed to the strong personalities of the participants, their level of education and proficiency in English, and their clearly evident individual profiles within their migrant communities.⁹¹ These factors are significant in the overall analysis, and will be discussed further in Chapter Six.

In terms of group dynamics, several notable observations were made about focus group two:

(1) Mr L spoke on behalf of his wife (Mrs R) throughout most of the thirty-question interview, even in the event of Mrs R being addressed directly and invited to speak;

(2) upon the arrival of later participants, the hitherto domineering approach of Mr L altered markedly, and his subsequent contributions were considerably briefer;

(3) the interpreter (Mrs N) assumed her interpreting role with professional dignity, however, with the clearly engaging subject matter and robust nature of the discussion, she eventually found herself compelled to participate. Moreover, her contribution proved particularly insightful and ultimately invaluable to the core theoretical and practical focus of this thesis.

It seemed there were gender issues at the fore in this focus group. This observation will be addressed in Chapter Six and included in the findings in Chapter Seven.

⁹¹ These are not permitted to be identified, as per the explanation in footnote # 86, p. 105

Key Informant Interviews

As explained in Chapter Four (p. 73), ‘key informants interviews’ are interviews with the leaders and stakeholders for particular communities of interest “in order to gain insight into the structure of the cultures of the groups under study. They provide a quick way of canvassing the views of a collection of communities of interest,” (Tolich and Davidson *ibid*: 131). As also noted, the aim of including key informant interviews in the triangular approach to this case study was to evaluate the extent to which migrant-specific media *inform* their audiences politically or indeed, consider it their role to do so.

In terms of ethnic media consumers’ perceptions of the role of ethnic minority media to inform and engage voters in public political debate, focus group data above have revealed that all participants across the three discussion forums considered it important, indeed “their prime duty to do so,” as declared by Mr B of focus group two (p. 122). Accordingly, it is deemed an important aspect of the triangular approach to this research methodology to elicit the perspectives of ethnic media managers, editors and journalists in the capacity of ‘key informants’.

The following were approached and invited to answer eight questions regarding their individual perceptions of the role of their particular media:

Mr Robert Kahn	Managing Director, Radio Tarana 1386 AM, Auckland
Dr Parmjeet Parmar	Host of <i>Programme Current Affairs</i> , Radio Tarana, Sundays 5pm-6pm
Mr Venkat Raman	Editor of twice-monthly free newspaper <i>Indian Newslink</i>
Mrs Kulwant Kaur	Director of fortnightly free newspaper <i>Kuk Punjabi Samachar</i> and monthly free newspaper <i>Kuk Hindi Samachar</i>

Regrettably, despite repeated attempts to elicit responses from all potential contributors approached by email, telephone, and post containing a stamped-addressed

envelope, only one written response was received. This response was from *Indian Newslink* editor Venkat Raman, who also hosts regular interviews with the prime minister and the leader of the opposition on *Programme Current Affairs* on Radio Tarana. Comments from Radio Tarana Manager Robert Khan on the role of ethnic minority media in informing and engaging voters were presented earlier in this thesis (Chapter Three, p. 52), and are reiterated below as a supplementary perspective. They are not valid within the methodological context of ‘key informant interviews’.

Indian Newslink

Indian Newslink editor Venkat Raman provided insightful comment in his considered responses to the case study questionnaire. As his written response was the only one received, it is included in full and unedited below:

1. As specifically as possible, could you please define your target audience?

Our target audience comprises people of Indian origin (Indians from India, Fiji and rest of the world), Pakistanis, Bangladeshis, Sri Lankans, Nepalese and increasingly other ethnic communities including European, Maori and Pacific Islanders.

2. In relation to your thoughts on question 1, how does the use of the English language in your newspaper cater to the wider target community?

India is a country of more than 23 languages and most Indians understand and communicate in English. Even non-English speaking people migrating to New Zealand make an attempt to learn English. *Indian Newslink* is an English language publication.

3. How do you perceive the role of *Indian Newslink* in politically informing and engaging its target community in general?

Indian Newslink reports and analyses current affairs issues which invariably touch on politics. *Indian Newslink* was the first newspaper to launch its election pages (called

Electionlink) with its July 1, 2007 issue, the pages were launched at two separate functions held at our office by Prime Minister Helen Clark and Opposition leader John Key. Since then we have carried more than 100 articles, features and reports on New Zealand politics.

4. During the 2008 general election campaign how has Indian Newslink informed and engaged potential voters?

Please see above. Our November 1, 2008 issue carries a 16-page Election Special.

5. How influential a role do you think Indian Newslink will have on the level of voter turnout among Indian and South Asian/Indo Fijian migrants in the 2008 election?

We believe it is substantial, based on the reader response.

6. To what extent do you think political candidates and parties have accessed and utilised ethnic minority media during the 2008 election campaign?

Labour, National and Progressive parties have understood and acknowledged the value of *Indian Newslink* and write regular columns.

7. In your experience, how has this been different from previous election campaigns, if at all?

We have not seen any difference, since we have been consistent in providing equal opportunity to all political parties who have cared to respond and communicate with our readers.

8. How do you perceive the role of ethnic minority media in general in New Zealand? (Print, broadcast, online, first language/English)

I am not sure if *Indian Newslink* can be called, 'ethnic media,' since it is only in English language albeit catering predominantly to the South Asian communities. We have had encouraging response from advertisers, contributors and others. *Indian Newslink* has also launched the Indian Newslink Indian Business Awards to recognise and reward successful businesses. We are also in the process of launching a journalism scholarship with AUT University in Auckland.

Radio Tarana

As stated earlier, Radio Tarana Manager Robert Khan, addressing an Elections New Zealand conference entitled *Minority Versus Power: Asian Electoral Participation*, declared “the role of ethnic media is to educate the community about the election process and make them to be (sic) heard through the democratic process rather than staying in isolation” (ibid.). Khan also commented on *Radio Tarana’s* extensive political opinion polling within the Indian community in conjunction with *Indian Newslink* in the lead-up to the 2005 election, explaining that the polls aimed to “measure the popularity and interest of the listeners and to create a platform in what the community thinks. This has given the community an edge in knowing what political awareness they have” (ibid.).

(As stated, these comments have been included for supplementary background information rather than valid methodological analysis).

Summary

The limited response to key informant interviews clearly limits the depth of analysis able to be provided in this section of the case study, particularly in contrast with the other two areas constituting the triangular research approach - focus groups and content analysis. In both cases, the data generated proved more substantive.

The validity and generalisability of this primary research data in supporting the research hypothesis is further restricted in that *Indian Newslink* is an English language newspaper. With the three other media outlets being Hindi and Punjabi, a 100 percent response would have provided a more valid dataset, albeit narrow, for a comparative analysis across print and broadcast media in multiple languages representing the wider South Asian migrant community. Moreover, the editor of *Indian Newslink* possibly had a different perspective or agenda to those involved in Asian-language media. Indeed, he was reluctant for the newspaper he edited to be labeled as “ethnic minority media”. Any further speculation is not entered into here as the lack of a comparative dataset restricts its validity. However, it is acknowledged that further probing of this perspective would have proved beneficial to the testing of the hypothesis in this thesis.

In summary, while it could arguably be assumed that the editors and managers of ethnic minority media in New Zealand might declare a similarly resolute commitment to their role and responsibility of informing and engaging their audiences as would mainstream media in a healthy, well-functioning democracy, it is not able to be proven to any viable extent in this case study. A more comprehensive dataset comprising a fuller range of responses and perspectives was necessary to meet this methodological requirement.

Content Analysis

Reiterating Neuman (2006), “researchers have used content analysis for many purposes: [including] to study ... trends in the topics newspapers cover and the ideological tone of editorials ...” (p. 324). As stated, the aim of the content analysis in this thesis case study was to examine and evaluate trends in the coverage of political issues and election-related reporting and advertising in selected South Asian media during the 2008 general campaign. For logistical purposes, and in response to evident inconsistency within several of the media intended for analysis (as discussed in Chapter One, page 13), this case study analysis was restricted to three newspapers and one radio station. A quantitative approach was applied to the newspaper analysis, while the radio analysis was conducted and presented qualitatively.

Newspaper Analysis

With regard to the newspaper segment of the content analysis, a total of ten South Asian newspaper issues were analysed during the campaign period: four issues of an English-language newspaper; four of a Punjabi-language newspaper, and two of a Hindi-language newspaper.

The newspapers analysed in this case study comprised:

Indian Newslink

A twice-monthly, English-language, tabloid-sized free newspaper targeted at the South Asian community in New Zealand and available in most South Asian specialty supermarkets throughout New Zealand (mainly North Island), and certain libraries in Auckland. It is published on the 1st and 15th of each month. Size of issue varies depending on festivals or events. The newspaper is divided into regular sections titled: Homelink; Businesslink; Communitylink; Electionlink; Sportslink; Educationlink; Fijilink; and Opinion.

The 1 November issue, published a week before the election, also included a 16-page election special report, featuring comment from candidates, explanation about election day procedure and the MMP system, and editorial comment on the political scene and “the evolving fortunes that would influence the formation of a new government after November 8” (*Indian Newslink*, 1 November 2008:1). The issues analysed for this case study were: 15 September; 1 October; 15 October; and 1 November 2008.

Kuk Punjabi Samachar

A twice-monthly, Punjabi-language, tabloid-sized free newspaper available in Auckland which targets the Punjabi community in New Zealand. It is published in the first and third weeks of the month. Size of issue varies according to festivals and events. The issues analysed for this case study were: 17 September, 1 October, 21 October, and 5 November 2008.

Kuk Hindi Samachar

A monthly, Hindi-language, tabloid-sized free newspaper available in Auckland that targets the wider South Asian, Indo-Fijian, Hindi-speaking community in New Zealand. It is published on the 20th of the month by the same publishers as *Kuk Punjabi Samachar*. Size of issue varies according to festivals and events and it contains overlapping material from *Kuk Punjabi Samachar*. The issues analysed for this case study were: September 2008 and October 2008.

Quantitative Analysis

The following tables and graphs provide a statistical breakdown and graphic representation of political, politician-, issue- and election-focused reporting, photographs and advertising in each of the ten issues monitored during the election campaign. Analytical categories comprised:

Summary

Total pages of issue
 Total pages news (excludes sport, Bollywood, and full page advertisements)
 Total political, government- issue- and election-related news
 (measured in eighths as % of total net news eighths) = % of news

Total stories featuring politicians and political parties:

Helen Clark only
 John Key only
 John Key and Helen Clark
 National candidates only
 Labour candidates only
 National and Labour candidates
 Minor parties

Total issue-focused stories featuring:

Law and order
 Crime against South Asians
 The electoral system and voting
 Health
 Education
 Tax
 Immigration/emigration
 International trade
 Economy
 Employment
 Youth
 Housing
 Environment
 Ministries, government departments, or agencies

Photographs

Total colour photographs in news pages
 Total political, government, politician and election-related photographs
 Total front page photographs of Helen Clark
 Total front page photographs of John Key
 Total photographs of Helen Clark
 Total photographs of John Key
 Total photographs (appearances) of other Labour politicians or candidates
 (excluding election advertising)
 Total photographs (appearances) of other National politicians or candidates
 (excluding election advertising)
 Total photographs (appearances) of minor party politicians or candidates
 (excluding election advertising)
 Total photographs (appearances), including election advertisements,
 of South Asian politicians or candidates, including governor general
 Total election advertisements for Labour candidates/party
 Total election advertisements for National candidates/party
 Total election advertisements for minor parties/candidates
 Total *Elections NZ* 'Orange Man' advertisements/graphics

Table 5.1**Statistical summary of political and election-focused news, photographs, and advertising**

	Indian Newslink 15 / 9	Indian Newslink 1 / 10	Indian Newslink 15/ 10	Indian Newslink 1 / 11	Kuk Punjabi Samachar 17 / 9	Kuk Punjabi Samachar 1 / 10	Kuk Punjabi Samachar 21 / 10	Kuk Punjabi Samachar 5 / 11	Kuk Hindi Samachar September	Kuk Hindi Samachar October
Total pages issue	52	32	84	32	24	32	64	32	16	20
Net pages news	17	25	18	25	11	12	18	14	5	9
Net political news %	41 %	19 %	48 %	67%	23%	9%	16%	16%	10%	12%
Helen Clark only	2	1	0	5	0	0	0	1	0	0
John Key only	1	1	1	2	1	0	1	1	1	1
Clark & Key	2	1	1	3	0	0	0	1	0	0
National only	1	0	2	6	0	2	1	1	1	1
Labour only	3	2	1	6	2	1	1	0	0	0
National & Labour	1	0	1	3	1	0	0	0	0	0
Minor parties	1	2	1	5	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total photos	28	48	40	60	33	13	42	27	12	22
Politics & election	19	10	24	57	14	3	20	11	6	8
Front page Clark	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	1	0	1
Front page Key	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	1	0	1
Total photos Clark	3	1	1	6	1	0	1	3	1	1
Total photos Key	3	0	2	3	1	0	2	2	1	2
Total other Labour	8	3	8	7	5	0	3	0	0	0
Total other National	2	0	7	14	3	0	4	0	0	0
Total minor party	0	0	3	8	0	0	4	0	0	1
Total South Asian	5	8	9	9	6	1	4	3	1	1
Total Labour ads	1	2	4	6	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total National ads	1	1	4	8	3	1	0	5	3	3
Total minor party ads	0	1	0	4	0	0	3	3	0	0
Total Elections NZ ads	2	1	2	2	1	0	0	2	1	0

Table 5.2**Statistical summary of issue-focused stories**

	Indian Newslink 15 / 9	Indian Newslink 1 / 10	Indian Newslink 15/ 10	Indian Newslink 1 / 11	Kuk Punjabi Samachar 17 / 9	Kuk Punjabi Samachar 1 / 10	Kuk Punjabi Samachar 21 / 10	Kuk Punjabi Samachar 5 / 11	Kuk Hindi Samachar September	Kuk Hindi Samachar October
Law and Order	3	1	3	14	4	5	9	1	1	1
Crime against South Asians	3	1	1	5	3	2	7	0	1	1
Elections & voting	5	1	6	6	1	0	1	1	1	1
Health	1	2	2	3	0	0	0	0	0	0
Education	1	0	2	4	0	0	0	0	0	1
Tax / KiwiSaver	1	0	2	9	0	0	1	1	0	1
Immigration	1	1	3	6	0	1	1	1	0	1
International trade	0	0	2	4	0	0	0	0	0	0
Economy	0	0	3	12	0	0	1	0	0	1
Employment	1	0	1	1	1	1	0	0	0	0
Youth	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Housing	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0
Environment	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
Ministries / Govt. departments	3	4	0	1	1	3	3	0	0	1

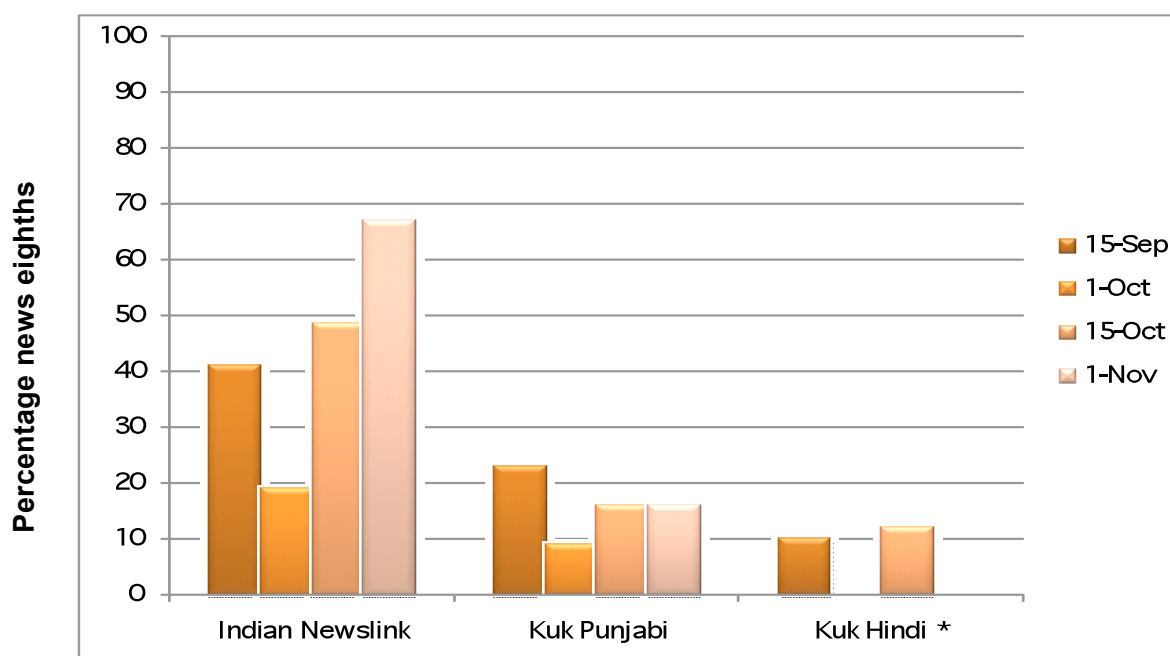
Comparative Representations

Below are graphic representations of the above statistics, collated according to the following categories:

- (1) *Space*: total percentage space (in net news eighths) of political and election-focused stories in ten issues of three newspapers
- (2) *Political and election issues*: total number of stories featuring fourteen categories in ten issues
- (3) *Politicians and political parties*: total number of stories featuring seven categories in ten issues
- (4) *Photographs*: total number of photographs featuring politicians and candidates in ten issues (eight categories)
- (5) *Election Advertisements*: total number of election advertisements in ten issues (four categories)

Figure 5.1

Percentage total cumulative space (net news eighths) featuring political and election-related stories



* monthly

Figure 5.2

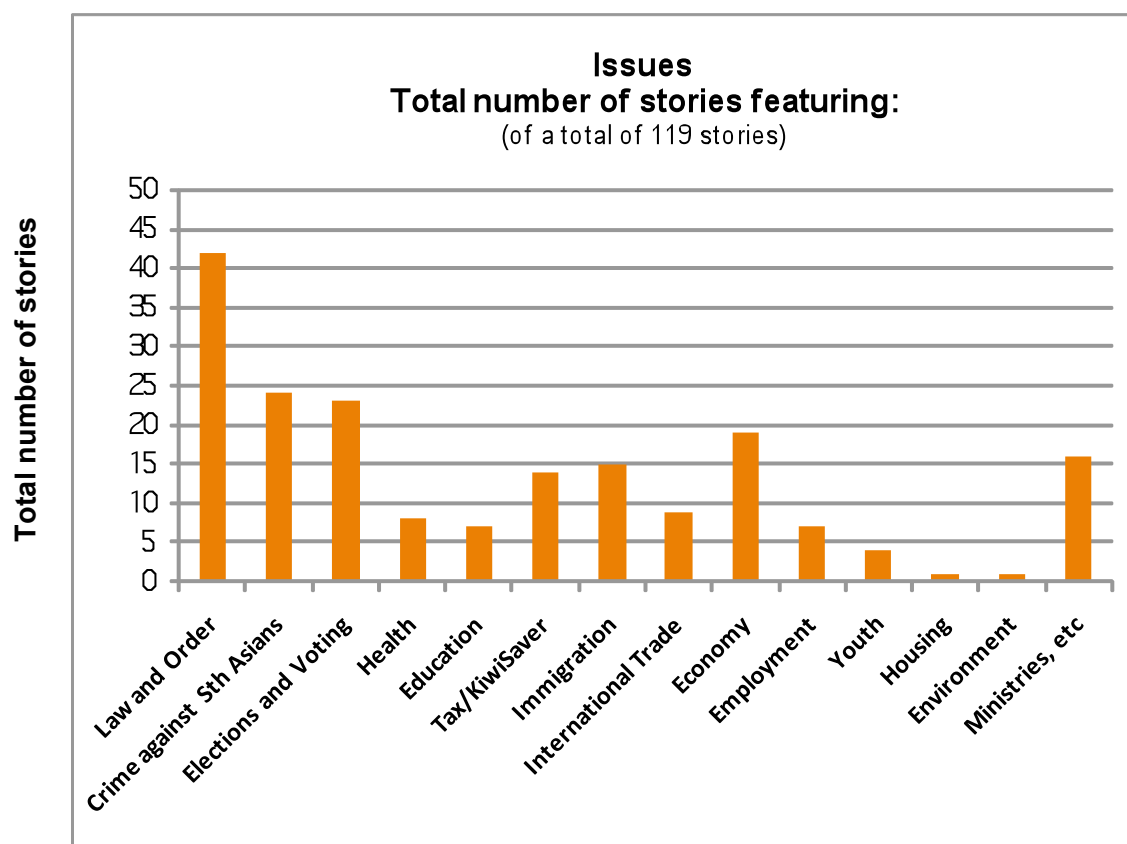


Figure 5.3

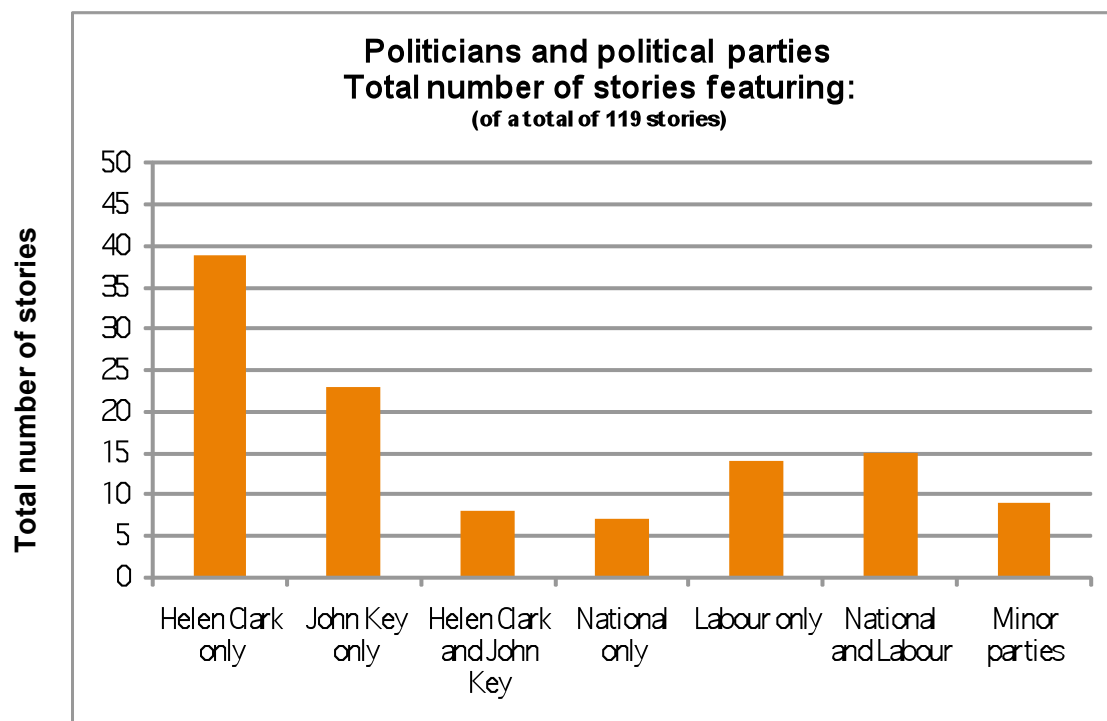


Figure 5.4

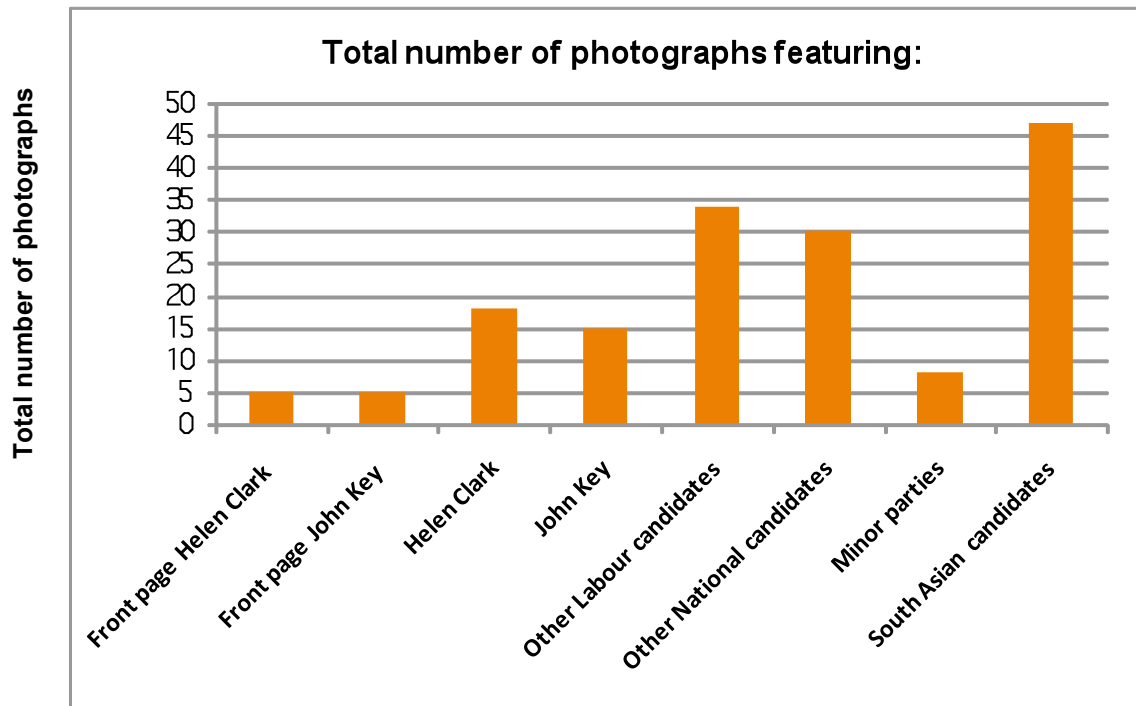
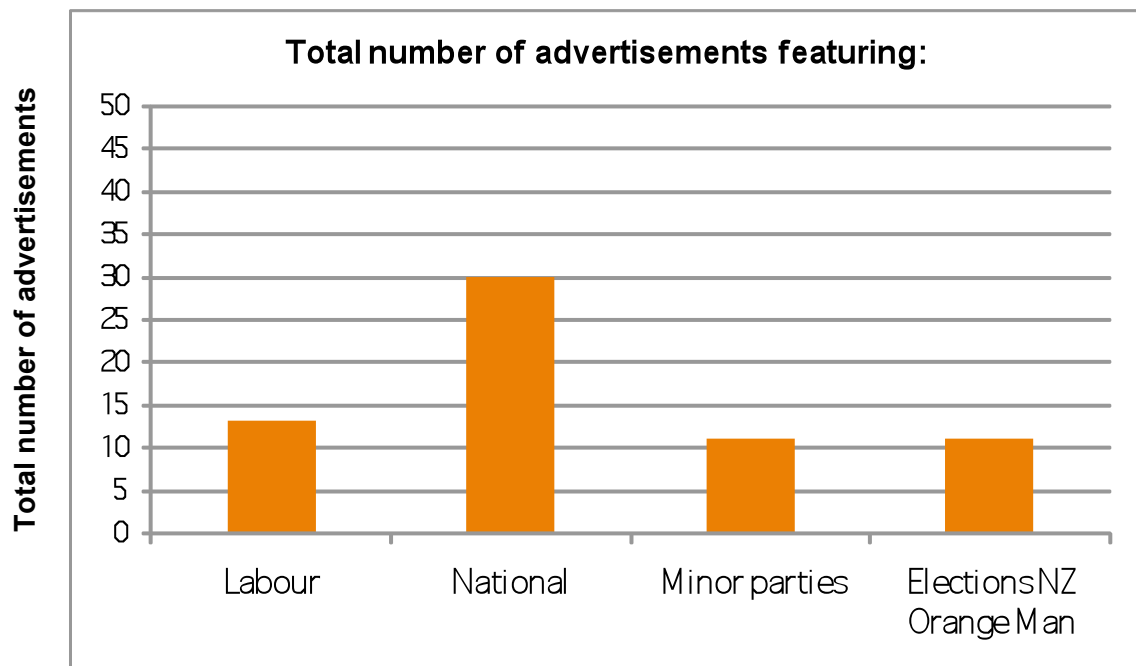


Figure 5.5



Radio Analysis

The radio analysis component of this case study focused primarily on the political and current affairs programme *Programme Current Affairs*⁹² broadcast on Hindi language radio station, Radio Tarana, 1386 AM Auckland, on Sunday evenings between 5pm and 6pm. In the lead-up to Election Day, programme hours were extended, with Sunday 2 November featuring three hours of election-related programming between 4pm and 7pm. The regular programme host is Dr Parmjeet Parmar, who hosts a range of other programmes on Radio Tarana.⁹³ The programme broadcast between 4.30pm and 5pm prior to *Programme Current Affairs* is hosted by aforementioned *Indian Newslink* editor Venkat Raman. Titled *Ek Nazar* (Take a Look), this programme regularly features interviews with the Prime Minister and the Leader of the Opposition, depending on their availability. This segment was included in election programme analysis for this case study from the second week onward.⁹⁴

According to the station's own website:⁹⁵

Radio Tarana initiated its broadcasting on 15th June 1996, [at] 5.00 pm and since then it has proudly been New Zealand's number 1 Hindi Radio Station. Radio Tarana aimed primarily at New Zealand's Indian Community, provides the Hindi language service on 1386AM. It has listenership of around 80,000+ in the greater Auckland area. Programmes include substantial local contents [with] specialised contributors dealing with [a] wide range of cultural issues.

Mission:

To maintain and keep our status and image of being the number one Hindi Radio in New Zealand by being mindful of the listening needs and values of our listeners.

Our Purpose:

We endeavour to entertain, educate, inform, preserve & develop culture and foster mutual understanding between the different originating groups in the Indian Community, using the universal language of music, news, views, information and being mindful of the diverse interests, religious and ethnic origins of the audience we cater for.

⁹² The programme is referred to by its English name, but broadcast in Hindi

⁹³ Radio Tarana, www.tarana.co.nz/news/staff/dr.-parmjeet-parmar.html

⁹⁴ As recommended by host Venkat Raman, *personal telephone communication*, 14 October 2008

⁹⁵ Radio Tarana www.tarana.co.nz/news/radio-tarana/about.html

As indicated above, Radio Tarana is broadcast on the AM network in the greater Auckland area. It is also streamed live via the Internet through www.radiotarana.co.nz. For logistical reasons,⁹⁶ the analysis for this research project was conducted via live streaming. Each programme was recorded live and research data noted regarding the number and gender of callers and the time of each call.

The content analysis period commenced on Sunday 28 September, two weeks after the official announcement of the election date, and concluded on Sunday 2 November, six days prior to Election Day. While the first Sunday following the announcement of the election date was 14 September, dedicated election-focused programming did not commence until a fortnight later,⁹⁷ this date accordingly being selected as the commencement of the analysis period. This allowed for programme monitoring over a six-week period. The five programmes⁹⁸ ultimately recorded yielded 9½ hours of interviews and talkback discussion, with programme duration ranging from one to three hours, depending on proximity to Election Day. The recordings were subsequently translated from Hindi into English by the same University of Canterbury doctoral student who had assisted with the Hindi newspaper translation, in conjunction the researcher, over an eight-week period between 2 April and 27 May 2009.

The following is a qualitative content analysis of the five individual programmes in chronological order. In accordance with the qualitative methodological approach outlined in Chapter Four, this section analyses the discussion topics raised and debated by the host, talkback callers, supplementary interviewers and featured political candidates. It identifies the issues discussed and incorporates quotes from each programme that reflect the mood and concerns of the South Asian community at the time.

⁹⁶ The radio analysis component of this research was conducted from Christchurch.

⁹⁷ Venkat Raman, *personal communication*, 18 September 2008

⁹⁸ Due to a technical fault with Radio Tarana's live streaming facility, the programme broadcast on 12 October was unavailable via the Internet (*confirmed via telephone communication with Radio Tarana, Monday 13 October 2008*) and the short notice of this fault did not allow for alternative recording arrangements. An attempt was made to source a copy of the programme, however Radio Tarana was unable to guarantee provision of this copy within the timeframe required (*Radio Tarana, telephone communication*, 28 April 2009). The six-week analysis period thus comprises five recordings.

Programme One: Sunday 28 September 2008 5 pm - 6 pm

Theme of programme: Introduced as an “election programme.” Listeners were invited to phone in and suggest which politicians and political candidates they wished to feature on the programme from the following week onward, and which issues they wished to discuss and have addressed by those politicians and candidates.

Feature interview: John Key was scheduled to appear on the programme but did not phone in.

Number of callers: 13 (12 male, 1 female)

Host Dr Parmjeet Parmar emphasised that the election was very important and urged:

“You must vote ... the election comes every three years and you must use your right. Even though the candidate or party or party you vote for may win or lose, you should still vote. Whoever wins you must tolerate their policies so you must properly exercise your vote ... If you are not enrolled then you can call free 0800 367656 or free text 3676. After enrolling you must vote.”

Dr Parmar invited calls about “issues that affect the Indian community” and what would influence their vote. She periodically repeated her invitation for callers to phone in and indicate who they intended to vote for and why, and similarly re-emphasised enrolling and voting during the programme.

In response to the introduction of several personally-focused questions, the host asked callers to refrain from asking questions relating to personal situations (e.g. immigration application problems), rather that they raise general policy questions to be put to politicians and candidates in the weeks following.

Significant issues and comments in relation to the research hypothesis:

“My colleagues and I are very concerned about National’s early childhood education policy and removing the requirement to be qualified. I’m worried about the effect on quality and salary. Now there is a shortage of jobs and many Indian women are doing early childhood education courses. We pay a fee to the provider and we work very hard. If National’s policy comes, all our hard work will go to waste.”

“Why do immigration applications take so long to process? Because it takes so long, it encourages people to go through the side route, for example, through an agent.”

“I want to ask about increasing crime on immigrants. There’s already been one death in a shoot-out in a liquor store. Police don’t have enough power to deal with such incidents. My brother has a liquor store and he has had some trouble with youths. He phoned the police but they say they can’t do anything because the culprits are minors.”

“I want to ask John Key, how strongly will the politicians stick to their promises? Or how much will they compromise with other parties?”

“There should be no tax [GST] on grocery items.”

“Will National increase the police presence? More resources and money need to be put into law and order. It is not safe here now.”

“The crime rate is increasing. Most of it is in South Auckland and most criminals are on some sort of benefit. An empty mind is a devil mind. Benefits should be stopped apart from medical benefits. Government should reduce benefits every three months so that beneficiaries will think about getting a job. They should be made to do volunteer jobs.”

“Most refugees are not genuine. Burmese refugees should be stopped – they are coming in through the back door and know how to “work the system.”

“Fatal crime is increasing every day. Capital punishment should be reintroduced.”

“Law and order is a problem. There is a high crime rate in South Auckland. The Government is doing nothing. More money should be put into law and order.”

“Right now the interest rate is very high. There is a financial crisis and finance companies are going under. I’m very worried about what will happen next.”

“Why don’t Helen Clark and John Key want the minor parties to appear in the leaders’ debate? They want to go on TV but they don’t want the minor parties. Why not?”

“The waiting time for immigration applications for siblings and relatives is too long. People are giving up and leaving for Australia. Here, the concept of family is different from India.”

Programme Two: Sunday 5 October 2008 4.30 pm – 6 pm

Theme of programme: Dr Parmjeet Parmar introduced her current affairs programme by commenting on national poll results indicating a preference for National, yet she had observed in two programmes she had hosted earlier on Radio Tarana, that listeners indicated a preference for Labour. Listeners were invited to phone in and indicate which party they intended to vote for and why. They were also invited to comment on crime in the wake of newly-released statistics regarding an 11 % increase in all violent crime and 29% increase in family violence. With regard to crime, listeners were also invited to comment on the case of South Auckland liquor store owner Virender Singh, who had been charged with assault but claimed he was acting in self-defence.⁹⁹

Dr Pamar also advertised her Tuesday night *Aap Main Aur Zindagi* (You, Me and Life) programme during which she was scheduled to interview Manukau East National Candidate Kanwaljit Singh Bakshi, and the Tuesday following, Labour List candidate, Dr Rajen Prasad.

Feature interviews: Prime Minister Helen Clark was interviewed live from 4.38pm to 4.52pm during Venkat Raman's *Ek Nazar* programme. John Key had phoned in unexpectedly at the same time and was therefore interviewed by Dr Parmjeet Parmar separately. The recorded interview subsequently aired after 6pm.¹⁰⁰

Pakistani Labour List MP Dr Ashraf Choudhary was interviewed live (in Hindi) between 5.43pm and 5.58pm. Total interview time in 1 ½ hours of programming: 29 minutes, plus 15 minutes of interview time with John Key broadcast after 6pm.

⁹⁹ "Court rules liquor store owner Singh will not stand trial" New Zealand Herald [online] http://www.nzherald.co.nz/nz/news/article.cfm?c_id=1&objectid=10563462

¹⁰⁰ The John Key interview was broadcast after 6pm and was followed by further calls from listeners. This hour was not recorded, as the election programme schedule, advised in personal telephone communication with presenter Venkat Raman on 2 October 2008, was to air between 4.30pm – 6 pm and a follow-up conversation with host Venkat Raman on 14 October 2008, revealed the clash of interview times and subsequent 6pm broadcast of the John Key interview.

Following the Prime Minister's interview during the 4.30pm – 5pm *Ek Nazar* segment, host Venkat Raman and co-host Ravi were required to cover for Dr Parmjeet Pamar while she recorded an interview with John Key. The hosts discussed in depth the Virender Singh self-defence case and their personal perspectives on a “need to change the justice system.” Venkat Raman also referred to a meeting he had attended the day earlier at Manukau City Council at which local police had explained the legal definition and limits of ‘self-defence.’

Number of callers: 9 (8 male, 1 female)

Significant issues and comments in relation to the research hypothesis:

In inviting callers to phone in with their comments on the two main discussion topics of the programming – party preference and crime – the host emphasised:

“Through this programme, we can share and explore each other's thinking and we can absorb a particular issue in a certain way.”

She drew attention to party launches and release of policies:

“You may be aware that this next week is very important because 12 October is the official launch of the campaign. Apart from that, the National Party will release their policies.”

Callers then phoned in and offered personal perspectives on party preference:

“Definitely Helen Clark has made a difference to this country. There is no doubt about that because of her personality and the way she has handled the world, especially during the terrible war which was declared against Iraq ... She was very strong in saying we are not going to war.”

“[The last caller] was talking rubbish because in both of your polls Indians prefer Labour because it helps them to come into this country. But we have not come through the back door ... Labour is helping them come through the back door.”

“I will support any candidate who is Indian, no matter what party ... I think there should be one Indian in Parliament.”

“Radio Tarana has a strong influence on the Indian community and I would like to say in this forum that the next government will be National and I will vote for National.”

“What has National done for us in Opposition? I can’t find any significant contribution. In fact, they opposed many of the good things Labour has done.”

“We are supporting Labour ... Helen Clark helps Indians a lot – either from India or Fiji – she helps everyone. She started KiwiSaver, increased income for pensioners, free bus and ferry service for pensioners. [Host responds: What about crime?] Crime will not be solved by any government.”

“I have voted Labour for three elections but the security issue is very serious ... considering security, now I would like to vote National. Apart from that, there is no Indian candidate in Labour Party and there are some in National.”

[Host responds: There is Dr Rajen Prasad] “But he is Fijian Indian”

“I am a small business owner who suffered a theft in my shop ... although I reported it, the police have done nothing at all about it ... what is the limit of self-defence? If I’m a victim then my family will suffer. The culprit will get legal aid and after 5-6 years, he will be out of jail, but what about my family?”

The interview with Dr Ashraf Choudhary consisted primarily of his perspectives on Labour’s achievements:

- (1) KiwiSaver; (2) Working For Families; (3) Cheaper doctor’s visits;
- (4) 20 hours’ free early childhood education; (5) Interest-free student loans;
- (6) Increase in minimum wage; (7) Tax cuts, effective 1 October, 2008;
- (8) Kiwi Rail buy-back; (9) Free travel for senior citizens in off-peak hours

The host challenged Dr Choudhary on the issues of crime, law and order, and recently-released statistics indicating an increase in violent crime and domestic violence.

Programme Three: Sunday 19 October 2008

4.30 pm – 6.30 pm

Ek Nazar 4.30 pm - 5 pm: An interview was scheduled with Prime Minister Helen Clark, however, she was in transit between Wellington and Auckland at the time and therefore unable to be interviewed live. Host Venkat Raman and co-host Ravi consequently discussed the official National, Labour, and Act Party campaign launches and Labour's announcement of bank deposit insurance. Venkat Raman commented on John Key's dissatisfaction over not being consulted prior to the announcement. He also highlighted feature stories in the latest issue of *Indian Newslink*, one being the promotion of "important constituencies to watch" during the election campaign. Of particular significance were the following comments from the two hosts:

In urging listeners to vote, Venkat Raman declared, "everyone knows that the vote of the Indian community is very valuable," to which Ravi responded, "you have said a very big thing. Now in our community, we have the power to shift the focus of any party towards us." Raman elaborated:

"Key constituencies like Mt Roskill, Mt Albert, Manukau East and Botany, they all have significant Indian communities - though they are not in the majority - but they can upset the result if they vote. That's why we would like to request that, please vote for any party, whether National, Labour, Green, Act, or NZ First. So please vote. It's very, very important. If we don't vote, then we don't have the right to criticise the Government. Maybe the party or person you vote for wins or loses, whatever is the result, it is our duty to vote."

Raman concluded with comments regarding reported abuse of young brides in arranged marriages, who are having sponsorship withdrawn. He urged any women listening who were

in such a situation to: (1) go to the police; (2) go to their local member of parliament; or (3) contact the Indian Embassy.

Programme Current Affairs 5 pm - 6.30 pm

Theme of programme: Dr Parmar indicated she would like to focus on *immigration* and *tax cuts*, in response to National's tax policy announcement concerning changes to KiwiSaver to fund tax cuts, and Winston Peters' comment, "no jobs, no immigration" (as described by the host).

Number of callers: 12 (all male)

Significant issues and comments in relation to the research hypothesis:

"If anyone is coming down from overseas and driving a taxi, then it's not a government problem because if they applied to immigrate in this country and if they're not getting an appropriate job then they can return home. They shouldn't complain."

"The Government did nothing for nine years to increase the minimum wage but then, after strong lobbying from unions, they did. In nine years, Helen did nothing at all."

"Illegal immigration is a confusing argument – whoever is illegal should get legal status."

"I don't think there's anything wrong with the current KiwiSaver, as recently there were tax cuts. The Indian community is very flexible regarding their family budget. Most of the Indian immigrants in New Zealand are young – between 40 and 45, or less than 40 - and both husband and wife are working, so they can manage their finances well."

"We just ignore Winston Peters – he always says such things before elections to get the votes. If he becomes a minister in Helen Clark's new government, then it will not be good for her because National has already said they will not get his support. That guy is definitely corrupt. The Green Party said New Zealand needed 1.2 million immigrants – it's election time so everybody wants to woo, or turn against immigrants."

“I don’t support Winston Peters’ view because under the family reunion policy, getting a job offer for each individual is a very long and cumbersome process. No employer will wait for such a long time.”

“No western country can survive without immigrants. They’re important for the survival of western countries.”

Interview with John Key - summary of topics discussed:

- (1) Education: literacy and numeracy standards
- (2) Economic Plan: member tax credits on KiwiSaver
- (3) Health: funded places and bonding scheme for medical students
- (4) Brain drain: “... highest in the world. We want higher wages and lower tax rates, and voluntary bonding to extend to other occupations.”
- (5) MMP: binding referendum wanted by 2011. “We’re unlikely to return to FPP but perhaps we could introduce a Supplementary Member System. This has nothing to do with National’s ability to form a coalition.”
- (6) No change to GST: “It is an important tax.”
- (7) Recent disagreement with Pita Sharples will not lessen National’s chances of forming coalition with the Maori Party
- (8) Building and Construction policy: insurance scheme to be implemented to protect subcontractors, and leaky homes model to be streamlined
- (9) Building Act 2004: “... it needs to be reformed. Labour has failed to do so and it is inefficient. The bureaucracy needs to be loosened.”
- (10) No parole for repeat and violent offenders: “We want to take the side of the victim. Youth gangs are terrorising shopkeepers. It’s ridiculous – we’ve got to have greater police numbers.”
- (11) Reform of the Victims Rights Act 2002 – “we want to upgrade the Victim Notification Register.”

John Key was invited to conclude with a message to listeners and accordingly, encouraged them to “give two ticks to National.” Dr Parmar concluded by summarising the points raised by John Key during the interview.

Programme Four: Sunday 26 October 2008 5 pm – 7 pm

Theme of programme: Dr Parmar explained that Prime Minister Helen Clark would be interviewed later in the programme and invited listeners to raise questions they wished to be put to her. She asked listeners how they were feeling with only two weeks until the election, adding, “do you know, this election is a bit different from previous ones in the sense that this time, there are more candidates of Indian origin?”

Dr Parmar elaborated: “If we talk about the two major parties, we have Dr Rajen Prasad for Labour and Kanwaljit Singh Bakshi from National. In both these parties, there were Indian candidates in the past but their list rankings were low. Now Dr Prasad is at number 12, while Kanwaljit Singh Bakshi is number 38.” Later in her introduction, Dr Parmar asked, “do you think that, if more candidates of Indian origin are selected for Parliament, it will help the development of the Indian community and your voice will be represented more effectively in Parliament? Do you think it will benefit our community?? Do you think ethnic people will benefit our community?”

Feature interview: Prime Minister Helen Clark 6.20 pm – 6.51 pm.

Number of callers: 21 (19 male, 2 female)

Significant issues and comments in relation to the research hypothesis:

“Yes, ethnic people will understand immigrants in a better way and provide more protection to the community. We should be represented properly by these people.”

“Helen Clark is good but her ministers have let her down. She should take more ministers from ethnic communities who have experience of working in a big country. These people can get a much better result.”

“We can’t defend ourselves even if four or five people are coming at us with arms. Please ask the Prime Minister what we can do about self-defence. Like police, we also want to protect our life and we have a family to look after.”

“I agree with the last caller that police don’t turn up on time and we can’t do anything in self-defence.”

“I’ve listened to the Rajen Prasad and Bakshi interviews. Bakshi is not only going for the Indian community – he’s going for the whole, broader community. Rajen Prasad wants a better relationship with India and Fiji. Choudhary also came on your programme and he also showed that he’ll raise the issues of the Indian community in Parliament, but nothing [has] happened – nothing at all.”

“I don’t think any party can make a difference to law and order.”

“There’s no policy for youth. They are goal-less and don’t know what to do. There’s a large number of school dropouts. There should be some goals for these youth, like military training or sports activity.”

“There are girls getting pregnant in school and staying in school. They shouldn’t go to school – they should stay at home. They are a bad influence on the other children.”

“I thought that vote-grabbing politics was only in India but now I see the Labour Party is following the same ... Islanders or Māori are mostly involved in law and order and most of cases. This fact is clear and Helen Clark will not come out with any definite policy or concrete steps because they fear if they do so, they will lose the vote from that sector.”

“Parliament is like a joke. What about Philip Taito (sic)? There’s so much corruption. And small-scale industry – they don’t think about business. What is Helen doing? Will Helen Clark close all remaining industry?”

“We’re spending a lot on caregivers. In Australia, they have tax incentives for under threes. Why can’t they have that here?”

“If Helen Clark forms the next government, then are they going for a free trade agreement with India like China?”

Feature Interview with Prime Minister Helen Clark

Listeners' questions put to the Prime Minister by host Dr Parmjeet Parmar:

1. "What is Labour going to do to improve the current situation of crime which is happening on shop owners and bank people, and customer services, and everywhere?"
2. "...my listeners, they think the current situation [for getting law and order under control] is not good enough and they feel that they don't have rights of self-defence because if they do anything in self-defence, they are charged. What is your stand on that?"
3. "What do you say to people who think there should be more police on the street? Any commitment to putting more police into South Auckland like National?"
4. "...the early childhood education policy introduced by your Government – is it working the way it was expected?"
5. "Student allowances – you announced that you plan to remove parental income testing by 2012? Why do you plan to do so?"
6. "Teenage pregnancy was one of the concerns expressed by one of my callers. Do you have anything to say to this listener?"
7. "We have a shortage of health professionals. Do you agree with what National is going to do to increase the number of doctors?"
8. "In the social development area, your policy is to assist people into paid work. How will you assist people getting into work?"
9. "How will manufacturers survive? ... [does] that mean that someone that doesn't have any new products or R and D will find it hard to survive?"
10. "You intend to simplify legislation and building code requirements - this will not take us back to leaky homes?"
11. "What do you think about Winston Peters saying 'no jobs, no immigrants'?"
12. "For a young professional couple with two little kids recently moved to this country, what is your message?"
13. "And what about those who are not finding that this place meets their expectations and who feel that they have to pack their bags and leave? What do you say to them?"
14. "Any plans to grant amnesty to those who have illegal immigration status?"

15. “Are you happy with [the] MMP system? Is it working for New Zealanders compared with FPP?”
16. “And now [the] Greens have already said they’ll go with you. Are you feeling confident you can form the next coalition government?”
17. “You and the Labour Party are very popular, I have to say that, among ethnic communities, not just Indians but also Polynesians, but after your stand on the coup in Fiji, there were some divided views. What do you say to the listeners who don’t agree with New Zealand’s stand on Fiji?”
18. “Relations with India and Pakistan have also improved since you’ve been Prime Minister – do you have any future plans in that direction?”

Prime Minister’s final message to listeners:

“Well, I have, I guess a request of the listeners and that is that Labour has always valued the support it’s received from Indian Kiwis and all South Asian Kiwis and we’re asking for that support again. We know other political parties have recently become interested in these communities but we’re saying there’s been a long-term commitment from Labour and that we keep very close contact with the community. We want to continue that contact and we value the support and we’ll work very, very hard to maintain the support we’ve had from the Indian community.”

Programme Five: Sunday 2 November 2008 4 pm – 7 pm

Socho Socho (*Think, Think*) Children's programme broadcast between 4 pm and 4.30 pm, hosted by Dr Parmjeet Parmar. On the Sunday prior to Election Day, this programme featured an election focus, wherein children were invited to phone in and discuss what they knew about the election. Accordingly, this particular programme was included in the final case study analysis.

Number of callers: 9 (5 girls, 4 boys)

Age range: 5 – 12 years

Topics covered: "You cast a vote to select a party"; MMP and 5% threshold; "The New Zealand system is different from India"; "You need to be 18 to vote"; "NZ was the first country to give women the right to vote"; "There are parties like National and Labour and the rest I don't know"; "Candidates who are selected can do good work for the community"; "I think the election comes every four or five years."

Ek Nazar 4.30 pm - 5 pm: (with Venkat Raman). Featured interview with Prime Minister Helen Clark: 4.36 pm – 4.48 pm.

Topics covered: Allegations against National candidate Kanwaljit Singh Bakshi; Why do you want a fourth term in office?; Where is the money coming for redundancy cover policy?; Do you think it will be misused?; How well-hedged are we against the collapse of the financial system?; In the event of a hung Parliament, would you be prepared to work with Winston Peters?; Now Peter Dunne is jumping ship, what are your thoughts on that?; What about working with the Maori Party?; Aside from the economic crisis, what would be the one issue you would take as an imperative?; What about law and order?; The community is not really convinced that you have tightened the law. What more would you do?; Sue Bradford

has said you have not done enough to educate people about the Section 59 amendment; What's the level of confidence you have with seven days to go?

Programme Current Affairs

5 pm – 7 pm

Theme of Programme: Accusations of fraud against Manukau East National candidate Kanwaljit Singh Bakshi. Dr Parmjeet Parmar invited callers to phone in to discuss this issue.

During her introduction, Dr Parmar explained she held a number of documents related to the Bakshi case: a signed affidavit from the applicant at the centre of the case; a copy of the job offer sent by Mr Bakshi; the official response from Immigration New Zealand declining the application; and a media release from the National Party regarding the case (which she read out during the programme).

Dr Parmar contained the entire programme to the subject of the Bakshi case. She also attempted to deflect any caller preoccupation with the “middle-man,” Baljinder Singh, of Tauranga, who had brought the issue to the attention of the media in the first place. Dr Parmar emphasised, “we will try to focus on the issue and not deviate to the middle-man. He is not the issue - he is just the middle-man.” However, she responded to accusations from several disconcerted callers regarding the middle-man’s “fraudulent” allegations against Bakshi by attempting to contact the middle-man himself to be interviewed during the programme. All attempts proved unsuccessful.

The ‘Bakshi’ issue polarised the audience, with comments aired during the programme expressing clear depth of sentiment.

Feature interviews: Kanwaljit Singh Bakshi 5.17 pm – 5.22 pm

Kuldeep Singh - applicant at the centre of the Bakshi “fake job offer” case (interviewed in Punjabi, live via telephone from India) 5.27 pm – 5.34 pm and subsequently, from 5.37 pm – 5.42 pm

Number of callers: 23 (22 male, 1 female)

Significant issues and comments in relation to the research hypothesis:

“I’m very disappointed after hearing your programme and I think that Radio Tarana has now become the voice of the Labour Party. I know that we won’t come to any conclusion on this case. This question will only affect Bakshi’s candidacy – not us – or Radio Tarana.”

[Host: “We will also raise the issue against Winston Peters and discuss it on Radio Tarana.”]

“Radio Tarana will affect only Mr Bakshi, not Winston Peters or any other non-Indian candidate.”

[Host: This is wrong that Winston Peters will not be affected by our programme. The media affect any person, whether Indian or non-Indian. You are the judge and you have to decide.”]

“Bakshi is not so much guilty – he’s just trapped in politics which happen in Gurudwaras and I’m very disappointed with the timing of your show. You can raise this issue after the election.”

“I agree with the previous caller – this is illogical to raise this issue after five years. You have done a very wrong thing today.”

[Host: “It’s our duty to raise the issue when it’s exposed. Radio Tarana, and especially my programme, are neutral. Sometimes I have also been accused of being anti-Labour and today many callers claim that Parmjeet and Radio Tarana are pro-Labour but our programme keeps changing every week and it also changes the perception of people.”]

“I have listened to your callers and their criticism of Bakshi. I just want to praise your programme for just trying to let the listeners know about the issues.”

“Congratulations for ripping Bakshi apart. I commend you. My confidence in Radio Tarana is back. You know what happened to Winston Peters – we should adopt the same yardstick in the case of Bakshi, too.”

Chapter Six

Analysis of Case Study Research Data and Implications for Public Sphere Theory

This chapter analyses case study research data and methods presented in Chapter Five within the theoretical parameters of the key research question:

In what ways and to what extent do ethnic minority media represent a vital complementary public sphere for informing and engaging migrant communities in public political debate and the democratic process?

The key research question is addressed by presenting applicable research data yielded in each of the three sections of the triangular approach to the case study above. In this study, an insight into migrant political engagement was elicited through focus group responses to questions on: (i) identity; (ii) participation and belonging; (iii) interest in politics; (iv) attitudes towards voting and representation; and (v) electoral engagement and the media. Key informants from local South Asian media were to provide editorial and journalistic perspectives on the roles and responsibilities of ethnic minority media to inform and engage voters politically, particularly during an election campaign. Finally, quantitative content analysis of political- and election-focused newspaper coverage of the 2008 election, in addition to qualitative content analysis of themes and issues discussed in talkback radio current affairs programming, provided a comprehensive insight into the extent to which South Asian media informed and engaged voters during the 2008 election campaign.

It is important to reiterate relevant articulations of public sphere theory in order to provide a contextual framework for analysing the research data. As discussed in Chapter Three, the Habermasian concept of the media as a public sphere in democratic societies

provides a solid theoretical framework within which to examine the role of ethnic minority media as a channel for informing and engaging migrant communities in the democratic process. However, as argued, revised interpretations of Habermasian public sphere theory, particularly those of Fraser (1990), provide more useful conceptual frameworks for analysing the role of ethnic minority media.

Fraser's concept of *multiple public spheres* captures the essence of this thesis. Of particular significance is Fraser's contention that public life in egalitarian, multi-cultural societies cannot function exclusively in a single, comprehensive public sphere and the idea of a multicultural society can make sense only if it supposes a plurality of public arenas in which groups with diverse values and rhetorics participate (Fraser *ibid*: 69). "By definition, such a society must contain a multiplicity of publics" (*ibid.*). Her concept of participation is one which means being able to speak in one's own voice to construct and express one's cultural identity through idiom and style – not through a single, culturally-neutral lens, rather through multiple public spheres which allow the formation not only of discursive opinion but also of social identities (*ibid*: 68-69).

As outlined in Chapter Three, Fraser articulates several key principles which can be applied to the analysis of the role and responsibilities of ethnic minority media:

1. Multicultural societies require more than a single, comprehensive public sphere to enable participation by groups of "diverse values and rhetorics"
2. Participation means being able to speak in one's own voice in order to express cultural identity through idiom and style
3. Multiple public spheres allow the existence of alternative opinions and social identities

To reiterate, the incorporation of the explanatory term "complementary" into the key research question and hypothesis acknowledges the responsibility of mainstream media to represent migrant interests, yet signifies the importance of ethnic minority media in providing an alternative channel of communication which enables migrant communities to speak in their own voice to construct and express their cultural identity through idiom and style.

Analysing the case study research data within this conceptual framework thus allows flexibility in assessing the role of ethnic minority media, as it does not presuppose any demarcation between the two ‘public spheres,’ rather it assumes an overlap in the roles and responsibilities of each.

As stated, a further analytical framework for assessing the *role* of ethnic minority media is provided within key questions posed in Chapter Three (p. 51):

1. Within a political context, should ethnic minority media be expected to function as a means through which migrant communities can absorb political information and convey community-specific needs and aspirations to politicians, local body representatives and policy-makers?
2. Should they be expected to provide a channel for dialogue about becoming an active participant in economic, social, civic, cultural and spiritual affairs?

Focus Groups

The two focus groups and an individual interview conducted in Auckland during the week of the 2008 general election provided a useful insight into migrant interest and level of participation in politics and the election in their adopted country. A total of twelve participants shared personal perspectives on a range of political and media-related topics, including: New Zealand’s attitude to migrants; a need for greater representation of ethnic voices in Parliament; a need for greater mainstream media coverage of migrant issues; and, most significantly, the importance of ethnic minority media, particularly migrant-language media, as a communication channel for migrant communities.

Hindi- and Punjabi-language media were identified by ten of the twelve participants as an important means of communication about the election, voting, and migrant political representation. Significantly, the two participants who indicated that they did not personally rely on ethnic minority, or migrant-language, media for political or electoral information

nevertheless emphasised the importance of ethnic minority media for migrant communities in New Zealand. Indeed, both suggested there was a need for growth in this sector, including in one case, the establishment of Urdu-language media to meet the language and communication needs of his migrant Pakistani community.

Participants in focus group two were questioned as to whether they considered there was increased interest in the ‘ethnic vote,’ particularly by politicians, in the 2008 election campaign, and whether they anticipated ethnic minority media would have an impact on voter turnout among migrant communities. All participants strongly agreed. All twelve focus group/interview participants declared a firm intention to vote in the 2008 election. Five of the twelve participants were first-time voters, five were second-time voters, and the remainder were third and fourth-time voters. Significantly, one of the first-time voters had resided in New Zealand for ten years but had never voted. It could be argued that this participant’s intention to vote after ten years in New Zealand coincided with his decision to learn English formally, (as suggested by the language school liaison person),¹⁰¹ providing contact with political and election-focused discussion in the classroom situation.

The most significant of the findings from all three discussion forums was the participants’ identification with, and support of, Hindi- and Punjabi-language media. Several references were made to the availability and importance of media in one’s own language, not only to listen to and speak, but to be exposed to Hindi and Punjabi script, particularly in the case of the New Zealand-born children of newer migrants. It is notable that participants identified *Kuk Punjabi Samachar* and *Kuk Hindi Samachar* more readily than English-language *Indian Newslink* as their South Asian media of choice, when content analysis data reveal that this publication consistently carried a significantly higher quantity of political and election-focused content than the other two publications (refer figure 5.1, p. 129). This is one finding that warrants further examination and analysis.

Nearly all participants listened regularly to Radio Tarana and/or Apna 990, with Radio Tarana the Hindi-language radio station of choice overall. Most indicated a preference

¹⁰¹ *Personal communication*, 27 March 2009

for phoning in to Hindi-language talkback, rather than mainstream radio. However, none indicated they identified more with candidates who advertised in South Asian media. Indeed, one participant explained she relied “about half-half” on mainstream and Hindi-language media for political and electoral information, as Radio Tarana, for example focused on the Indian / South Asian candidates and she did not favour this coverage over mainstream media “because it’s not all candidates and issues.” This point is analysed further in the radio analysis section later in the chapter.

With regard to perceived expectations of the role of ethnic minority media according to the supplementary questions presented above, question 26 of the focus group questionnaire asks: “Do you feel it is important for South Asian media to provide information about the election, voting, and political participation?” All agreed, with Mr B of focus group two declaring “I feel it is their prime duty to do so” (refer appendix 4.3, p. 230).

However, in response to the questions “do you feel the mainstream media represent and engage the South Asian community in New Zealand?” and “how about politically?” Mr B of focus group two continued, “they take us on board but still much needs to be done,” while Mrs N suggested more representation, involvement and engagement are needed (ibid).

Implications for Public Sphere Theory

The following is a summary of the focus groups, guided by the core principles of Fraser’s multiple public sphere theory identified above:

Multicultural societies require more than a single, comprehensive public sphere to enable participation by groups of “diverse values and rhetorics”

Focus group participants expressed strong support for ethnic minority media in New Zealand as a vehicle for expressing their community-wide concerns and facilitating communication by enabling a means of meaningful participation in wider New Zealand

society. Many indicated a need for greater representation of minority voices in Parliament and greater coverage of South Asian news and issues in the mainstream media, indicating that this discourse originates and develops within ethnic minority media.

Radio Tarana talkback provides a forum for topics of specific concern to the South Asian community to be discussed in greater depth and to a greater extent than they would arguably be debated in the mainstream media. Similarly, ethnic minority newspapers allow more in-depth reporting of issues of specific concern to their migrant audiences. Letters to the Editor columns in *Indian Newslink* attract, on average, 200 letters per issue and allow migrant voices to be expressed in a culturally familiar and appropriate public sphere.

Participation means being able to speak in one's own voice in order to express cultural identity through idiom and style

“One’s own voice” can be interpreted in more ways than one’s own language. It can signify the ability and opportunity to speak as a migrant in a migrant-focused forum, discussing issues affecting migrant communities. It can mean being able to participate as a Hindi-speaking Hindu or a Punjabi-speaking Sikh in a political forum which understands the cultural, political, religious and social background of its participants.

However, focus group research has revealed *language* as the key – being able to speak, read, and communicate in one’s own language is vital to many migrants:

“The mainstream language is like a barrier.”

“Naturally you go to your own language.”

“I’m thinking it’s Radio Tarana ... I see in the TV so I don’t understand much more, just little, but in Radio Tarana so it’s my language so I can understand everything, so that’s a good way.”

The aforementioned ‘Bakshi’ controversy, and the participant’s need to access Radio Tarana for clarification in Hindi, of the circumstances of the case which she had attempted unsuccessfully to understand through mainstream media news, provides a particularly useful illustration of the complementary role of ethnic minority media in accordance with Fraser’s multiple public sphere theory.

With regard to questions about identity and belonging and the relationship between personal identity (Asian versus South Asian) and motivation for establishing migrant-specific (or specifically, Hindi- or Punjabi-language), no clear connection could be established from the data yielded from this research.

Multiple public spheres allow the existence of alternative opinions and social identities

Several participants indicated they would be more likely to write a letter to the editor of an ethnic minority newspaper than a mainstream newspaper. Similarly, several indicated a greater likelihood of phoning a Hindi-language radio station than a mainstream station. However, some participants explained that it would depend on the issue and how extensive an audience they intended to reach. Similar sentiments were expressed regarding advertising in ethnic, rather than mainstream newspapers. In this regard, the opportunity for “alternative opinions and social identities” is available to migrant communities, enabling them to participate meaningfully in a social or political context appropriate to their individual social and cultural circumstances.

Research Indicators and Level of Support for Hypothesis

The research indicators identified in Chapter Four (p. 82-83) state that the hypothesis would be supported if: (i) focus groups comprised at least four attendees (ii) participants indicated that they DO access South Asian media for political and electoral information: (iii) participants accessed *at least one* South Asian newspapers *at least once* during the election

campaign (given that the newspapers monitored for this case study are published fortnightly and monthly): (iv) participants accessed migrant-language newspapers more readily than the English language newspaper; and (v) participants indicated they would be more likely to access South Asian talkback than mainstream radio talkback

While the sample size was small and the limited clarity of some responses did not provide a clearly articulated indication of propensity to access ethnic minority media, the majority of participants answered in the affirmative to the questions:

16. Do you access local (New Zealand-based) South Asian/Indian media?
17. Which local South Asian/Indian media do you access most frequently? Why?
18. What information are you most interested in sourcing from South Asian media?
19. Would you be more likely to write to the Letters to the Editor in a South Asian/Indian newspaper (e.g. *Indian Newslink*, *The Dawn*, *Indian Tribune*) than a mainstream newspaper (e.g. *The NZ Herald*)?
20. Would you be more likely to phone a South Asian/Indian radio station (e.g. Radio Tarana, Apna,) than a mainstream commercial radio station?
22. How do you feel about having specific South Asian media in New Zealand?
23. Are you following the election in the media (any media)?
24. If so, do you access mainstream media or South Asian media for election news and information?
26. Do you feel it is important for South Asian media to provide information about the election, voting, and political participation?

- In this regard, it is argued the level of support for the hypothesis is medium - high.
- In terms of the *frequency* of access, the findings are inconclusive as participants all indicated they do access South Asian media but not specifically how frequently.
- In terms of the size of the focus groups, clearly two of the three did not meet the minimum requirement of four participants and this diminishes the strength of support for the hypothesis.

Overall level of support for the hypothesis: medium-low

Key Informant Interviews

As explained in Chapter Four (p. 73) *key informant interviews* are interviews with the leaders and stakeholders for particular communities of interest “in order to gain insight into the structure of the cultures of the groups under study – [t]hey provide a quick way of canvassing the views of a collection of communities of interest” (Tolich and Davidson, *ibid*: 131). In the context of this thesis, the ‘key informants’ were the managers, and editors of the media examined within the content analysis section of the case study.

The selection of media managers and editors as key informants aimed to provide an important perspective within the triangular approach to the methodology applied in the case study. They were invited to comment on their individual perspectives of the roles and responsibilities of ethnic minority media in politically informing and engaging their migrant communities, both overall and in the lead-up to the 2008 election in particular. To reiterate, specific questions included (refer pp: 127-128 for full questionnaire):

- 1 *How do you perceive the role of your media in politically informing and engaging its target community in general?*
- 2 *During the 2008 general election campaign, how have your media informed and engaged potential voters?*
- 3 *How influential a role do you think your media will have on the level of voter turnout among South Asian/Indo Fijian migrants in the 2008 election?*
- 4 *To what extent do you think political candidates and parties have accessed and utilised ethnic minority media during the 2008 election campaign?*
- 5 *How do you perceive the role of ethnic minority media in general in New Zealand?*

Although a disappointing response from those approached provided only limited research data, some insightful perspectives were nevertheless elicited. These are analysed below within Fraser’s multiple public spheres framework. As stated earlier, the methodological validity of including responses from Radio Tarana Manager Robert Khan is questionable and accordingly acknowledged. However, they are incorporated below to provide a wider perspective.

Implications for Public Sphere Theory

Multicultural societies require more than a single, comprehensive public sphere to enable participation by groups of “diverse values and rhetorics”

Radio Tarana manager Robert Khan provided the following perspective on the role of ethnic media in the political and democratic process (refer p. 121):

“The role of ethnic media is to educate the [South Asian] community about the election process and make them ... heard through the democratic process rather than staying in isolation.”¹⁰²

Within the context of multiple public spheres enabling participation by groups of diverse values and rhetorics, this perspective and its reference to “staying in isolation” is significant, as it implies that, without ethnic minority media, migrant communities would arguably not have a voice or be heard, and thus not be engaged in the democratic process.

Indian Newslink editor Venkat Raman expressed a firm belief his newspaper would have a “substantial” influence on voter turnout in the 2008 election, “based on the reader response.” He indicated that, in terms of the extent to which political candidates and parties accessed and utilised ethnic minority media during the 2008 election campaign, the Labour, National and Progressive parties understood and acknowledged the value of *Indian Newslink* and [wrote] regular columns.

¹⁰² *Minority versus Power: Asian Electoral Participation.*” Conference proceedings [online] <http://www.elections.org.nz/study/asian-electoral-participation-conf-proceedings.html>

Participation means being able to speak in one's own voice in order to express cultural identity through idiom and style

Robert Khan commented on *Radio Tarana's* extensive political opinion polling within the Indian community in conjunction with *Indian Newslink* in the lead-up to the 2005 election, explaining that the polls aimed to “measure the popularity and interest of the listeners and to create a platform in what the community thinks. This has given the community an edge in knowing what political awareness they have” (refer p. 121).

Similarly, in his media statement regarding Radio Tarana's number nine ranking in the greater Auckland commercial radio market ratings, Khan commented, “[s]uch an impressive and large increase in listenership demonstrates that we are with the community, delivering what the people want; that in essence is the basis of our operations” (Indian Newslink, 1 June 2009)¹⁰³

Multiple public spheres allow the existence of alternative opinions and social identities

Venkat Raman explained *Indian Newslink* caters predominantly to the South Asian communities. It has had an “encouraging response” from advertisers, contributors and others, and has also launched the Indian Newslink Indian Business Awards to recognise and reward successful businesses. As at October 2008, *Indian Newslink* was also in the process of launching a journalism scholarship with AUT University in Auckland. Robert Khan commented on Radio Tarana's 2009 ratings, “[a]s well as a continuous and remarkable increase in our listenership, it is gratifying that an ethnic radio station is competing with mainstream broadcasters.”

¹⁰³ “Indian radio station among top ten” *Indian Newslink* 1 June 2009
<http://www.indiannewslink.co.nz/index.php/homelink/3180.html>

Research Indicators and Level of Support for Hypothesis

The research indicators outlined in Chapter Four state: (i) key informant interviews would be expected to reveal a commitment by all managers and editors to informing and engaging voters during the election campaign; (ii) they would be expected to respond in the affirmative with regard to whether they consider it their role and responsibility to do so; and (iii) support of the hypothesis would require responses from all four managers.

Clearly, the fact that only one of the four key informants responded to the questionnaire seriously limits the methodological viability of the research findings in this segment of the triangular approach. The editor of *Indian Newslink* did express a clear commitment to informing and engaging voters during the election campaign and declared emphatically that it was his role and responsibility to do so.

Overall level of support for the hypothesis: low

Content Analysis

The quantitative and qualitative approaches to the content analysis in this case study provided a useful insight into South Asian media coverage of the 2008 election. While quantitative newspaper analysis revealed the extent of South Asian newspaper focus on issues, politicians, candidates, political advertising, and electoral information, the qualitative radio talkback and current affairs analysis provided depth through comments expressed directly by participants, often over issues of concern to the South Asian community specifically.

Newspaper Analysis

Ten issues of English-, Punjabi-, and Hindi-language newspapers published between 15 September and 5 November 2008 were monitored to determine the amount of space and number of candidate and issue-focused stories, editorials, photographs, and election advertisements in South Asian newspapers during the election campaign. The issue-focused stories were quantified according to the following categories: law and order; crime against South Asians; the electoral system and voting; health; education; tax; immigration/emigration; international trade; economy; employment; youth; housing; environment; and ministries, government departments, or agencies.

Radio Analysis

Five broadcasts of Radio Tarana's *Programme Current Affairs*, hosted by Dr Parmjeet Parmar and broadcast on Sunday evenings between 5 pm and 6 pm, were monitored between 28 September and 2 November 2008. Significant caller and host comments in relation to the key research question were presented in the case study in line with the qualitative approach outlined. Predominant issues discussed during this six-week period included: immigration; KiwiSaver; party preferences; crime; the 'Bakshi controversy'; and

the potential effect of more Indian candidates and representation, in addition to audience questions to be put to political leaders and candidates. The programme also featured regular interviews with the prime minister, National Party leader, and selected South Asian candidates.

Implications for Public Sphere Theory

Multicultural societies require more than a single, comprehensive public sphere to enable participation by groups of “diverse values and rhetorics”

The most significant of the results of the quantitative newspaper content analysis were the number of stories focused on law and order, and in particular, crime against South Asians, and the number of photos of South Asian candidates in comparison with other candidates. Within the context of Fraser’s public sphere principle, ethnic minority media thus enabled an issue of profound concern to South Asian migrant communities - that of crime committed against South Asians – to be reported, analysed, and discussed in greater depth than it would certainly have been in the mainstream media.

The number of murders of South Asians was frequently reported, as was the aforementioned case of Virender Singh, charged with assault as a result of acting in self-defence after being robbed in his South Auckland liquor store. South Asian newspapers provided a vehicle for expressing South Asian community outrage over this incident. The media also reported on community-wide emotional and financial support for Singh and his family.

The exposure available to South Asian political candidates was clearly evident in the graphic analysis in Chapter Five (figure 5.4, p. 138). South Asian candidates were able to maximise exposure to a captive audience. As to the influence of this exposure on the subsequent success of the South Asian candidates who were elected to Parliament, this thesis would argue that ethnic minority media played a role in that successful outcome. As to the extent of that role, further research would be required to establish more decisively the

strength of links between South Asian media and voter identification with South Asian candidates.

Also requiring further examination is the difference between the level of political coverage in the one English language newspaper (clearly higher) and the two South Asian language newspapers. As stated in Chapter Five, the editor of *Indian Newslink* appeared reluctant to label his newspaper “ethnic minority media” and the implications of this perspective arguably lead to questions of demographic association. As also suggested in Chapter Five, further probing of this perspective would have proved beneficial to the testing of the thesis hypothesis. However, in terms of implications for public sphere theory, this proposition fits the tenet of enabling people of “diverse values and rhetorics” to participate.

In the radio analysis, Radio Tarana’s *Programme Current Affairs* provided a forum for South Asian migrants to participate in public political debate and the democratic process by expressing personal and community-wide concerns within the cultural context of shared values and rhetorics. Specific immigration issues could be aired, as could concerns over crime and personal security for dairy, shop, and liquor store owners affected by the increasing frequency of attacks against themselves and fellow community members.

Significantly, in the case of the Bakshi-focused programme of 2 November, the content and direction of the programme was firmly guided by the host, who attempted to curtail discussion about the “middle-man.” However, she later responded to heightened audience interest in this person by pledging to try and contact him during the programme. She also provided comprehensive documentary evidence of the aspects of the case deemed important to the wider South Asian community.

Participation means being able to speak in one’s own voice in order to express cultural identity through idiom and style

Clearly, the opportunity provided by Radio Tarana’s Hindi-language current affairs talkback discussion programme illustrates the principle of participation by being able to speak in one’s own voice. This is affirmed by the extent to which focus groups participants

identified Radio Tarana as a vehicle for participating in public political debate and becoming informed and engaged in the democratic process by being able to absorb information and communicate in their own language within their own culturally-specific contexts.

Multiple public spheres allow the existence of alternative opinions and social identities

Prime Minister Helen Clark and National Party leader John Key were each interviewed several times during Radio Tarana's Sunday evening election programme slots in the weeks leading up to Election Day 2008. Host Dr Parmjeet Parmar invited callers to phone in with questions they wished to have addressed, and this forum thus allowed questions of particular concern to the South Asian migrant community to be posed directly to each of the leaders. Accordingly, the existence of a complementary public sphere allowed the existence of alternative opinions and social identities.

Similarly, in *Indian Newslink*, editor Venkat Raman dedicated an opinion piece to the possibility of Indian candidates being elected to Parliament and representing the voices of the Indian community. Titled "Does the community deserve its own lawmaker?" the article discussed "the Indian need," arguing "it is time this minority group had a voice or two in Parliament" (*Indian Newslink*, 1 November 2008: 15).

Moreover, Punjabi-language newspaper *Kuk Punjabi Samachar*, with its Sikh focus, further illustrates a complementary public sphere which allows the existence of alternative opinions and social identities, in that it accommodates the "alternative opinions and social identities" of the burgeoning Sikh migrant population in New Zealand.

However, while Radio Tarana's talkback forum allowed "the existence of alternative opinions and social identities" with regard to South Asian voices, what was notable was the gender bias of callers to this programme. Of the 83 callers during the six weeks of programming, 78, or 94 percent, were male. While this thesis argues ethnic minority media do represent a vital complementary public sphere for informing and engaging migrant communities in the democratic process, this notable finding calls into question the *extent* of its capacity to incorporate a *range* of voices from the wider migrant community.

Research Indicators and Level of Support for Hypothesis

According to the research indicators in Chapter Four, during the election campaign *Kuk Hindi Samachar* and *Kuk Punjabi Samachar* would be expected to feature: (i) stories on the prime minister and leader of the opposition at least once in each issue; (ii) stories on all South Asian candidates; (iii) electoral advertising for all South Asian candidates; and (iv) stories on issues pertinent to the South Asian community, particularly in Auckland,

Indian Newslink, during the election campaign, would be expected to feature (i) a higher level of political content than either of the above; (ii) regular editorials and election-focused comment; (iii) a minimum of one story on each of the prime minister and leader of the opposition per issue; (iv) , and to feature stories on all of the South Asian candidates.

Radio Tarana's political programme would be expected to feature: (i) a minimum of eight calls and one interview with a political figure during a one-hour programme; (ii) a minimum of twelve calls and the possibility of a second interview with a political figure during a longer programme (closer to the election); (iii) issues current in the mainstream media and those pertinent to the South Asian migrant community, guided by the host; (iv) at least one reminder about the election date and how to enrol and vote.

As analysis has revealed in this chapter, all of the above were met.

Overall level of support for the hypothesis: high

Conclusion

Overall, the outcomes of the quantitative and qualitative approaches to the research methodology applied in this case study proved disappointing to the extent that, due to logistical challenges, they did not fulfil their defined aim of achieving *breadth* and *depth*.

As the above analyses indicate, the overall level of support for the hypothesis was below medium and thus compromises the generalisability and validity of the research results and hypothesis testing.

However, while sections of the project clearly did not proceed as intended, it is hoped that the resulting dataset offers a solid and useful platform for further research into this hitherto unexamined aspect of New Zealand media and ethnic politics. Its aim of drawing attention to a new topic has been achieved and it is hoped this thesis will provide a practical guide to relevant issues and methodologies, as well as comparative data for future studies.

Chapter Seven

Conclusion: Summary of Findings and Recommendations for Further Research

This thesis has examined the role of ethnic minority media as an important channel of communication for migrant communities in an increasingly multicultural New Zealand. Specifically, it has examined the extent to which ethnic minority media represent a vital complementary public sphere for informing and engaging migrant communities in public political debate and the democratic process. The South Asian community and its locally-operated media provided a compelling focus for the case study, given the rapidly expanding population base of this migrant community and the proliferation and success of its migrant-specific media. In terms of assessing the extent of migrant political engagement, the New Zealand general election of 2008 provided practical analytical parameters for this research project.

A review of the international literature on multicultural citizenship theory provided a contextual framework for examining the citizenship challenges facing new migrants, and specifically South Asian migrants, in an increasingly polyethnic nation. A timeline of New Zealand immigration policy amendments then provided a context for the influx of South Asian migrants in the late 1990s and early 2000s, while recent academic research provided a constructive illustration of the impact of South Asian immigration on the transformation of specific areas of Auckland and a context for the establishment and proliferation of South Asian-specific media.

With regard to media communication theory, Habermas' theory on the media as a public sphere provided a fundamental analytical framework for examining the role of ethnic minority media in the democratic process. Critiques of Habermas yielded useful revised interpretations of the media as a public sphere, with Fraser's 1990 theory on *multiple public spheres* providing the core theoretical framework for this thesis. Fraser's theory asserts that

the idea of a multicultural society can make sense only if it supposes a plurality of public arenas in which groups with diverse values and rhetorics participate. Her concept of participation is one which means being able to speak in one's own voice to construct and express one's cultural identity through idiom and style, not through a single, culturally-neutral lens, but rather through multiple public spheres which allow the formation not only of discursive opinion but also of social identities.

Accordingly, the research hypothesis formulated for this case study posited *that ethnic minority media represent a vital complementary public sphere for informing and engaging migrant communities in public political debate and the democratic process*. This hypothesis was based on the assumptions: (1) the predominant source of political and electoral information is via the media; (2) migrant communities do wish to become engaged in the democratic process in their adopted country; (3) some form of public sphere(s) is/are necessary in modern democratic societies; and (4) the mainstream media must assume responsibility for informing and engaging migrant communities but ethnic minority media represent a complementary function in this process.

The case study tested this research hypothesis from three different perspectives: from media consumers via focus groups; directly from media managers and editors; and through personal analysis of political and election-focused content of selected South Asian print and radio broadcast media during the 2008 election campaign. The quantitative and qualitative methodological approaches to the case study generated a range of primary research data and provided useful perspectives of the roles and responsibilities of ethnic minority media and migrant political engagement in New Zealand.

Triangular testing of the research hypothesis revealed the following key findings:

Key Research Findings

- (1) Ethnic minority media featuring a migrant community's own language(s) represent an important complementary public sphere for communicating political, issue-focused, and electoral information to migrant communities in New Zealand. During the 2008 election campaign, they provided migrants with necessary information which clarified and elaborated on political and electoral issues discussed in the mainstream media, and represented an opportunity for migrants to engage in public political debate, not only in their own language, but in community-specific cultural and idiomatic contexts.
- (2) Of the migrant participants in this research project, Hindi-language Radio Tarana was an influential and frequently-accessed form of media during the election campaign. However, as the sample size was very limited, any claim to generalisability cannot be made.
- (3) Among those migrants who participated in this research project, there seemed to be a declining propensity to access ethnic minority media as the time spent in New Zealand increased. Again, as the sample size was very limited, any claim to generalisability cannot be made.
- (4) South Asian candidates featured prominently in South Asian print and broadcast media during the election campaign. The editor of *Indian Newslink* commented that certain parties had understood and acknowledged the value of *Indian Newslink* and wrote regular columns, realising the benefits of ethnic media for their campaigning. The newly-elected Parliament of 2008 subsequently included three South Asian members, including the first-ever Indian candidates elected, and one Pakistani

returning to Parliament for a second term. It is therefore argued that South Asian media had the potential to influence the electoral success of South Asian candidates in the 2008 election. With broader, more substantive data, this finding could be explored further and its generalisability strengthened.

- (5) The predominance of male callers to radio talkback (94 percent) on Radio Tarana suggests “the public sphere” discussed in this thesis may be highly gendered. This assertion is supported by the domineering tendency of Mr L in focus group two and the fact that he spoke for his wife during the session. This notable finding warrants further investigation and could indeed provide the core focus for an individual research project.
- (6) No clear connection could be established between a sense of identity and belonging and a motivation for establishing South Asian-specific media. However, a more tangible connection was established between access to (particularly) Hindi- and Punjabi-language media and a propensity to participate, or become engaged, in the political process.

Limitations and Recommendations for Further Research

The role of ethnic minority media in democratic discourse is a topic merely touched upon in contemporary political communications research. However, with significantly increased migrant representation and ethnic diversity now evident within governing bodies in modern democracies, the subject of ethnic minority media and migrant political engagement demands greater attention.

This research project has accordingly sought to address a need for a more substantial body of academic research literature examining the citizenship engagement challenges and corresponding communications needs of migrant communities in a world which has experienced unprecedented levels of global migration in recent decades. In particular, it has examined this issue within the context of an increasingly multicultural Aotearoa New Zealand.

However, by focusing on the migrants and media of just one migrant community in New Zealand, this thesis has provided a mere snapshot of migrant political engagement through ethnic minority media in this country.

Moreover, imposing further research parameters by selecting the 2008 election campaign as a manageable time-frame for the case study focus restricted the analysis of migrant political engagement to just a brief time period and thus did not provide a broad overview of migrant political engagement through ethnic minority media in New Zealand. Yet to what extent is an academic or literary insight of this scope necessary?

In May 2009, the Office of Ethnic Affairs hosted a media forum in Christchurch which aimed to reconnect people working within the ethnic media sector. Attendees were given an opportunity to share information, identify capacity-building needs, explore ideas for collaboration, and discuss ways in which the Office of Ethnic Affairs could assist with their development. Later in the month, the Office of Ethnic Affairs hosted a South Asian forum in Auckland titled 'Connecting South Asians to the Media.' This forum offered a space for the South Asian community and media in the Auckland region to discuss the

value of being connected to the media, and explore ways the media could promote South Asian issues, culture and identity in New Zealand.¹⁰⁴

The Auckland forum was reported during Radio New Zealand National's *Dateline Pacific* programme on 8 June 2009. Radio Tarana manager Robert Khan commented, during this programme, on the need for more radio frequencies to be made available for ethnic broadcasters.¹⁰⁵ He had also commented several weeks earlier, on Radio Tarana's "stunning" top ten ratings results, released in May 2009, in which the station rated number nine in the greater Auckland commercial radio market in a ratings survey conducted in February/March 2009. Radio Tarana was the only ethnic radio station to rate in the top ten.¹⁰⁶

Moreover, in August 2009, the annual media forum at the New Zealand Diversity Forum was to focus on Asian Media in New Zealand. Presenters were to include key Asian media leaders and the forum was to look both at the media preferences of Asian communities, and how Asian communities are represented in the mainstream.¹⁰⁷

Clearly, the role of ethnic minority media appears increasingly topical, not only at a community level, but at a government and public policy level also. Should migrant media qualify for state funding? How significant a role will migrant media play in public political debate over minority representation in the proposed Auckland Super City plan? To what extent will South Asian media maintain, and indeed increase, political awareness and engagement among their migrant communities in the wake of three South Asian community representatives being elected to Parliament in 2008? How significant a role will ethnic minority media play in migrant political engagement during the 2011 election campaign? And on a broader level, how sustainable are ethnic minority media in New Zealand – will

¹⁰⁴ Office of Ethnic Affairs http://www.ethnicaffairs.govt.nz/oeawebsite.nsf/wpg_URL/Whats-Happening-Message-Board-Ethnic-Whispers-May-2009?OpenDocument#spotlight

¹⁰⁵ Radio New Zealand <http://www.rnzi.com/index.php>

¹⁰⁶ Indian Newslink <http://www.indiannewslink.co.nz/index.php/homelink/3180.html>

¹⁰⁷ Human Rights Commission [online] http://www.hrc.co.nz/newsletters/diversity-action-programme/nga-reo-tangata/2009/06/broadcasters-challenged-to-meet-diverse-audience/?utm_source=nga-reo-tangata&utm_medium=Email&utm_campaign=June2009

the New Zealand-born children of recent migrants access and engage with their migrant media as their parents have?

These questions reflect areas for further research into the role of ethnic minority media in democratic discourse. It is apparent, considering the current focus of both the Office of Ethnic Affairs and the Human Rights Commission, that ethnic minority media are enjoying unprecedented attention at a policy-formation level. However, it remains to be seen whether this level of attention can be sustained. It is simply hoped that this research project, as a contribution to the academic literature examining migrant political engagement through ethnic minority media, will serve to broaden individual perspectives on the value of active migrant community participation in New Zealand democratic society, and of migrant-specific media as a vital complementary public sphere for positively engaging these new voices ... and voters.

Appendices

Appendix 1: Focus Group Discussion Questions

Identity

1. How do you identify yourself in terms of ethnicity in official New Zealand documents?
2. How do you identify yourself in terms of ethnicity in social or informal situations?

Participation and Belonging

3. How do you feel about being a New Zealand citizen / permanent resident?
4. Are there any issues that affect your sense of belonging in New Zealand society?
5. In what ways do you feel you have participated, or do participate, politically in New Zealand?

Interest in politics

6. How interested are you in New Zealand politics – central and local?
7. Do you continue to follow politics in your home country?
8. How easy is New Zealand politics to understand?
9. What would help make it easier to understand?
10. Which New Zealand issues or public debate do you find interesting?

Attitudes toward Voting and Representation

11. Do you think it is important to vote in New Zealand? Why/Why not?
12. Do you continue to vote in your home country elections (if eligible)?
13. Which aspects of New Zealand elections and voting do you find challenging?
14. How well do you feel your interests and opinions are represented by your local member of parliament? By any member of parliament?
15. How well do you think the New Zealand Parliament represents New Zealand's ethnically-diverse population?

Electoral Engagement and the Media

16. Do you access local (New Zealand-based) South Asian/Indian media?
17. Which local South Asian/Indian media do you access most frequently? Why?
18. What information are you most interested in sourcing from South Asian media?
19. Would you be more likely to write to the Letters to the Editor in a South Asian/Indian newspaper (e.g. *Indian Newslink*, *The Dawn*, *Indian Tribune*) than a mainstream newspaper (e.g. *The NZ Herald*)?
20. Would you be more likely to phone a South Asian/Indian radio station (e.g. Radio Tarana, Apna,) than a mainstream commercial radio station?
21. Would you be more likely to advertise in a South Asian/Indian newspaper or on South Asian/Indian radio than in the mainstream media?
22. How do you feel about having specific South Asian media in New Zealand?
23. How interested are you in this year's general election?
24. Are you following the election in the media (any media)?
25. If so, do you access mainstream media or South Asian media for election news and information?
26. Do you feel it is important for South Asian media to provide information about the election, voting, and political participation?
27. Do you feel the mainstream media represent and engage the South Asian community in New Zealand?
28. How about politically?
29. Do you identify more with political candidates who place election advertisements in South Asian media (print and broadcast) than with those who advertise in the mainstream media?
30. Why / why not?

Appendix 2: Information Sheet for Focus Group Participants

INFORMATION

You are invited to participate as a subject in the masters research project of Kirsten Chambers. This project is entitled:

**“Political Communication in a Multicultural New Zealand:
Engaging Migrant Communities through Ethnic Minority Media.”**

The aim of this project is to examine and research the extent to which South Asian migrants are politically engaged as valued new citizens and permanent residents of New Zealand through local, migrant-specific media. This research is based on Habermas’ theoretical concept of the media representing a ‘vital public sphere’ in the democratic process.

Your involvement in this project will be by attending a 60 - 90 minute focus group comprising up to six recent migrants, men and women, from the local South Asian community in Auckland. The researcher will lead a discussion, based on the questions attached, on migrant political participation, voting, and political engagement through South Asian media in New Zealand. Three separate focus groups are to be held in Auckland. You will be required to attend only one of these focus groups. Each focus group will be recorded on audio tape.

You will not be required to write anything down during the focus group, and you are free to answer the questions in a manner with which you are comfortable. You will not be required to complete any tasks as a follow-up to this focus group. There are no risks involved with your participation in this research and you have the right to withdraw from the project at any time, including withdrawal of any information provided. All participants will be presented with petrol vouchers in appreciation of their willingness to participate in this research.

The results of the research project may be published but you may be assured of complete confidentiality of data gathered in this investigation: the identity of participants will not be made public without their consent. To ensure anonymity and confidentiality, no names or ages will be used in the written analysis.

This project is being carried out by Kirsten Chambers in fulfilment of a University of Canterbury masters degree in Political Communication under the supervision of Associate Professor Jim Tully, Head of School of Political Science and Communication. Associate Professor Tully can be contacted at the University of Canterbury at email jim.tully@canterbury.ac.nz or telephone (03) 3642 881. He will be pleased to discuss any concerns you may have about participation in the project.

This project has been reviewed and approved by the University of Canterbury Human Ethics Committee.

Contact Details

Researcher

Kirsten Chambers
School of Political Science and Communication
University of Canterbury

Email kec38@student.canterbury.ac.nz
Mobile (027) 2513 033

Academic Supervisor:

Associate Professor Jim Tully
Head of School
Political Science and Communication
University of Canterbury

Telephone: (03) 3642 881
Email: jim.tully@canterbury.ac.nz

Human Ethics Committee

University of Canterbury
Private Bag 4800
Christchurch

Appendix 3: Focus Group Consent Form

Kirsten Chambers
 School of Political Science and Communication
 University of Canterbury
 Private Bag 4800
 Christchurch

Kec38@student.canterbury.ac.nz

18 August 2008

Consent Form

Masters Thesis Research Project

“Political Communication in a Multicultural New Zealand: Engaging Migrant Communities through Ethnic Minority Media.”

I have read and understood the description of the above-named project. On this basis, I agree to taking part in a focus group discussion, comprising up to six new migrants, which will elicit my thoughts about voting, political participation, and political engagement through South Asian media in New Zealand.

I understand that the results of the project may be published but that the information is strictly confidential and the identities of the participants will not be known by unauthorised persons. I understand that the transcript of the focus group will be made available to me for checking and comment prior to the research data being analysed and published.

I understand this focus group will take no longer than 90 minutes at a time that has been mutually agreed by the researcher and the participants. I understand that the researcher can be contacted on:

Email: kec38@student.canterbury.ac.nz
 Phone: (027) 2513 033

Alternatively, I can contact her supervisor, Associate Professor Jim Tully, Head of School, School of Political Science and Communication, University of Canterbury.

Email: jim.tully@canterbury.ac.nz

I understand that I may withdraw from this project at any time, including withdrawal of any information I have provided. I am aware that I am free to discuss any concerns about the project with Kirsten Chambers or her supervisor, Associate Professor Jim Tully. I note that the project has been reviewed and approved by the University of Canterbury Human Ethics Committee

Name: (please print)

Signed:

Date:

Appendix 4: Focus Group/Interview Transcripts

Appendix 4.1

Interview One: Tuesday 4 November 2008, 10.30am

Location: Private Language School, West-Central Auckland

Researcher I'm just interviewing South Asian migrants about engagement in the political process, engagement as new citizens, do you feel engaged civically as a new citizen in New Zealand...

Mr D Ok

Researcher Through your own media ...when I say 'your own' I mean South Asian media in New Zealand, so...

Mr D Ok

Researcher So I'll just go through the questions that I'm going to ask the students...

Mr D Sure

Researcher The first one is, how you do identify yourself in terms of ethnicity in official New Zealand documents?

Mr D Ah, Indian

Researcher Indian, ok, and how do you identify yourself in terms of ethnicity in social or informal situations?

Mr D Yes, similar, same

Researcher Same? Ok, ah, how do you feel about being a New Zealand citizen or permanent resident?

Mr D I am a New Zealand citizen and I have always, ah, thought it's my adopted country so I do have a passion for things happening here and I want to participate actively and, ah, yeah, but still have those roots, Indian culture, Indian patriotism but now I've had to share that with my adopted country

Researcher Yeah

Mr D So, yeah, balance

Researcher Good, ok, are there any issues that affect your sense of belonging in New Zealand society?

Mr D Yes, sometimes I will be lying if I said that ... there are issues at times that you face... different levels in the society ... employment, ah ... or even just

living ... I – where in a different country where you are constantly reminded that you're a foreigner in different aspects of life, you know, but ah, I feel that, you know, that's part of, ah, choosing to live in another country which is different to your own in so many aspects ... cultural, social, economic, and all other aspects of life, so yes, we do, we do, I do personally, do, ah, but, ... in a negative way I do, how we are picked ... when people comment on how you look or where you come from or the colour of your skin or ...I'm not trying to give you undertones of racism here, but they are there, they're ... obvious ...

Researcher Ok

[interruption – knock at door for courier delivery]

Researcher In what ways do you feel you have participated, or do participate, politically in New Zealand?

Mr D Well, begin exercising my franchise, if I may use that word, ...

Researcher Yes

Mr D Um, casting my vote every time I have the chance, and I feel, it's not an obligation but I feel that it's important in the society that you live in, that you have a say, in who you elect and who you want to formulate policies, so yeah, in that way I ... I think there was only one occasion when I didn't vote but that was for some different reasons but otherwise in every ...

Researcher Every voting? Yeah, ok, ah, just talking about interest in politics, how interested are you in New Zealand politics ... central and local government?

Mr D Ah, I would say I am interested and we keep discussing a lot of issues and things with my colleagues and others, so you wouldn't categorise me under ignorant but I would say 90 percent

Researcher Oh, ok, do you continue to follow politics in your home country?

Mr D Ah, to a certain extent, yes, through media

Researcher Through the media?

Mr D Yes

Researcher How easy is New Zealand politics to understand...if you think about when you first arrived and now?

Mr D Yeah, first few years the MMP was a bit confusing, ah because we don't have a similar approach to elections, so that was a bit confusing but, yeah, it wasn't that difficult to get your head around

Researcher Ok, good! Ah, what would help make it easier to understand ... New Zealand politics ... if you think about when you first arrived?

Mr D Um, I am sure that a lot of immigrants, not only coming from South Asia, but different parts of the world, wouldn't understand the MMP system

- Researcher** Yep
- Mr D At all, so basically they go and vote because they've been told to give one party vote and one electoral MP
- Researcher** But they need more information?
- Mr D Yeah, they need more information, you know, a lot of people think that, if you vote National, so you also choose an MP from National, which is not necessarily correct...
- Researcher** So vote-splitting could be more ...?
- Mr D Yes, so if they understand the percentage of votes all for a particular party, 5 percent threshold, all that thing is not clear...for a lot of people a reason could be education background or even absence of such systems in their own country
- Researcher** Yeah, that's interesting, ah, which New Zealand issues, public debate do you find, personally, find interesting?
- Mr D A lot of issues! [laughs] ... right now I think ah ... these ten years, I have noticed that New Zealand has not grown economically, I've seen people losing more jobs than getting into jobs, I've seen more people leaving the country than coming into the country, a lot of policies have ... gone around or come around based on some damaging statements by politicians which affected a lot of growth in this country ... some people with half-baked ideas come up and say some nasty statement on the media and suddenly things, government changes its direction based on some stupid statement a politician makes ... so I felt that, if there's two burning issues that I feel that any government that comes to power should focus on, is the ... the crime and violence in this country, given the population of four point two million, or whatever it is, the proportion is so great, compared to other OECD countries, I feel or I come from a third world, so-called third world country, um people of one billion, ah, there is violence and crime there but, given a country like this, where you have four million people, you see every second day, you see someone being abducted, someone being bashed up, somebody being attacked, somebody being ... there's a lot of intimidation going on on the roads these days, I have not seen that in 99, 98, it was much safer, but these ten years I think the clock has turned around, and so economic and safety issues, employment issues, there's not much business going on here ... I'm not saying I'll be voting National anyway, neither am I saying I'll be voting Labour ... but say ... there's no growth as such, you know, wherein people feel confident and say, well, there's business, there's manufacturing, there's growth, there's industry, there's actual people who would like to live here, that's why we're losing a lot of ... there's a lot of brain drain ... a lot of young people going ... are we creating enough opportunities? That's the bottom line.
- Researcher** Yeah, ok, just talking about voting and representation, do you think it's important to vote in New Zealand?
- Mr D I think it is

- Researcher** Ok, and I've said why or why not, but I think you've already answered that in the other...
- Mr D Yes
- Researcher** Do you continue to vote in your home country elections?
- Mr D Since I have become a citizen of New Zealand, I don't have a point
- Researcher** Ok, which aspects of New Zealand elections and voting do you find challenging?
- Mr D [pause] Can you say that again?
- Researcher** Which aspects of New Zealand elections and voting do you find challenging? ... You've probably been here long enough to know ... this is probably directed more at more recent immigrants ... you know, who have been here only a few years, but ...
- Mr D Mmm
- Researcher** Are there any aspects you find challenging?
- Mr D I personally don't, no.
- Researcher** that's good, that's good to hear
- Mr D Yeah, personally don't but I don't know if I mentioned that before but, ... I think there is a kind of a stereotype going on in the political scene here like the, ah, moment you mention Labour, they attach certain things to that, and the moment you say National, they attach a few things to that ... that's a bit challenging for people who come from outside New Zealand, see, ah, they've been given to understand that Labour is this, this, this ... and National is this, this, this, which is not true, ...
- Researcher** No, not any more
- Mr D Say if you see, if you see National and Labour's policies, that have been announced, what's the difference
- Researcher** Very similar?
- Mr D Not much, everyone is trying to outbid the other by just increasing \$2 million more spending money on that ... basically same policy ... if it says I will give you 12 months, ah 12 weeks for some package, the other one comes up and says I'll give you 14 weeks, what's the difference? So basically that, that kind of subtle ah, ah, blurry issues, if I may use that word, is kind of challenging for these people
- Researcher** Challenging for new migrants?
- Mr D Who've just come and root down now ...
- Researcher** Yeah, what's the difference?

- Mr D What's the difference between these two?
- Researcher** Ok, how well do you feel your interests and opinions, and I'm talking about 'you' as a migrant, are represented by your local member of Parliament, or by any member of Parliament?
- Mr D None whatsoever, sorry to say that, no voice, I don't think there's an adequate voice of the immigrants because every election time you see somebody telling you you're not wanted here, so you would, would you expect somebody to listen to your voice? And specially since you are targeting the research to South Asians ... how many Indians would you find sitting lazily at home living on benefit? That's not in the culture of Indian people, because in India, we will look this, look at this system, welfare system, which is good actually, to help me out in troubled times, which says you are able to work ... if you're not working and you're living on handouts, that's a shame, that's how Indians perceive, and when you are working your butts out on the language and facing all sorts of slur and, and, ah intimidation, and you don't have, you don't get to say any of your opinions, or voice any of your opinions, still you go ... get out there and vote ... how, how does that sound? It's almost like tying your legs, your feet and your hands and saying that that, "ok, eat the cake"
- Researcher** Mmm, this is a similar sort of question, um, how well do you think the New Zealand Parliament represents New Zealand's ethnically diverse population?
- Mr D Not adequate
- Researcher** Ok, so similar sort of ...
- Mr D But again if you say that then the, the locals would say, well you chose to come here so how you ... beggars can't choose. We're not beggars [laughs]
- Researcher** No ... just talking about electoral engagement and the media, which is the real focus of my thesis, which is South Asian media engagement and the election and how South Asian media engage South Asian migrants in the electoral process, do you access local, New Zealand-based South Asian media?
- Mr D Unfortunately no, because most of it is stale news, the news is not up to date and so I read New Zealand newspapers and New Zealand Herald, for that matter, and I read about my country's politics online, ah, but at times I think here and there whenever I go to buy Indian groceries or something, you know, I pick up a newspaper
- Researcher** An Indian newspaper?
- Mr D Indian link or something
- Researcher** Indian Newslink?
- Mr D Newslink, or something like that, and I read a few, which is basically reporting to you 2 weeks old news or a week's old news, at times ...
- Researcher** And Kuk Hindi Samachar, do you access that at all?

- Mr D No
- Researcher** No, ok, so the next question is which local South Asian media do you access most frequently?
- Mr D I wouldn't say frequently but I do look at the Indian Newslink or something
- Researcher** Ok, so not Radio Tarana?
- Mr D No
- Researcher** No, ok, what information are you most interested in sourcing from South Asian media if you do access it?
- Mr D Honestly about India, not about local because I get all the information about things happening from New Zealand Herald and online news ... I read Sydney Herald online and yeah, that's out of, purely out of interest ...
- Researcher** So, um, you personally, would you be more likely to write to the letters to the editor in a South Asian newspaper or ... than a mainstream newspaper, or vice versa?
- Mr D ah, I would prefer to write to the mainstream newspaper rather than South Asian because, ah, I feel that the South Asian newspaper wouldn't do much, it might reach to the local Asian, local Indian people, but given the fact that it wouldn't change much in the way people think about our representation, ah, I think most people would be discouraged to do it
- Researcher** Ok
- Mr D So ... yeah, sorry about sounding so negative [laughs]
- Researcher** No, that's ok, no, ... um, as I said, its, this is again more probably for more recent migrants like the last five years, so it may be different when I talk to people who are more recent migrants, it's the same question about Indian radio, would you be more likely to phone in to Radio Tarana than ... like Radio Tarana talkback, political talkback, um, than mainstream radio?
- Mr D I would, I would, ...
- Researcher** Which is Indian
- Mr D I would give a call to Newstalk ZB rather than Radio Tarana, yes
- Researcher** Ok, that's good, ah, how do you feel about having specific South Asian media in New Zealand? Have you got any thoughts on ...about the existence of ...?
- Mr D I think there are already some small papers existing but I think there is a greater representation desired and required because I still don't think, in spite of a substantial percentage of Europeans, I mean Indians living in New Zealand, aren't being represented properly and that's not proper ah communication going on between, between the, the local New Zealand people, government, and the immigrants as such, I don't think there is much work, you know, you often see these politicians coming to the so-called immigrant ghettos and, ah, Helen Clark you will see her often in Mount

Albert now because she wants the votes, or, for that matter, you might see John Key who's never visited any immigrant areas much see, oh, you're here, so we still addressed him, so that kind of thing, so I think there is a lack of communication, you know, you can't just come and go whenever you want, there is, they are living in this country, they are contributing in their own way to this country and you want their votes but you should also listen to what they want to say and their voice and that's the important thing, ah, yeah, so I think that that's the need

Researcher Ok

Mr D Yes, I think they should do some improvements in that area

Researcher Ok, ah, how interested are you in this year's general election? I've kind of asked that already but ...you've already said you are interested ...

Mr D Yes, I am

Researcher Yes, ok, so you're following the election in the mainstream media

Mr D Yes

Researcher Yes, principally in the mainstream media and not in the .. on South Asian media

Mr D No

Researcher Ok, so next question, do you access mainstream media or South Asian media for election news and information? So your answer is ...

Mr D Yeah, I think at times, ah, though I don't really access information from South Asian media, ah but I do hear from opinions from people, especially belonging to my community, about which way they are leaning, which way they are going to go, with which party, and, yeah, that way I access information but not really reading

Researcher Word of mouth?

Mr D Yeah, not really reading a newspaper

Researcher Ok, ah, do you feel it's important for South Asian media to provide information about the election, voting, and political participation ... thinking about new migrants?

Mr D I think, I think it is very important because a lot of people, as I said, the first thing to make it clear is the, ah, MMP, a lot of new, ... I don't think even people who've been living here for six, seven years would understand that, they just go along and vote and they say red colour, blue colour, green colour, basically go and say yeah, I'm voting National this time so they go and vote National, they don't know what's going to happen, even if that MP is not going to win that particular constituency, what's going to happen with his or her vote, I think that knowledge is important, that information, and so ... they send letters out, ah, before election, registration, voters' registration and things like that, that only gives you where to go and vote and the list of party candidates and that, but before that, um, I know Councils do like the

whole workshops and things like that, but, ah, ask me about immigrants, ah, I think a lot of people, I wouldn't say a lot of Indians wouldn't understand because unofficially English is our first language, I was really taught English right from a child ...

Researcher Mmm, but you can imagine non-English speakers would find it challenging?

Mr D Yeah, I think

Researcher Ok, um, do you feel the mainstream media represent and engage the South Asian community in New Zealand?

Mr D Ah, you open the New Zealand Herald, how much do you read about immigrants or their works, or their problems or their issues, maybe in the editorial columns somewhere in small, you have these letters, people write to the editor, that's all, and now and then, once in three months if you get an article about it, mostly it would be about ... if they want to read about India, it would be about business, economy, IT centre, how India is doing, how it's impacting, that kind of thing rather than the local issues

Researcher So, ah, next question, how about politically, so do you feel the mainstream media engage the South Asian community politically and, you know, in the election campaign?

Mr D Of course it should because um, you see two sizeable immigrant populations you find here, both Chinese and Indians, and there are some people representing them in the elections as well, like you see a few faces, Indian faces, like Ravi Musuku or even that guy from National Party ...

Researcher Kalwanjit Singh Bakshi?

Mr D Yeah, Mr Singh, yeah, and others like Rajen ...

Researcher Rajen Prasad?

Mr D Rajen Prasad and so, ah, what does that tell you? You know, like you know there's a substantial Indian presence here in this community, it's good to ...

Researcher Time for a voice?

Mr D Yeah, represent those people and communities

Researcher Um, do you identify more with political candidates who place election advertisements in South Asian media than those in mainstream media?

Mr D Honestly I have to tell you I haven't seen these South Asian media so just ... yeah, no ... I'm well informed because I am in touch with mainstream

Researcher With mainstream?

Mr D yes

Researcher ok, the last question is why, or why not, but you haven't read it so ... well, thankyou very much, David, thankyou

Appendix 4.2

Focus Group One

Tuesday 4 November 2008, 10.30 am

Location: Private Language School, West-Central Auckland

- Researcher** [following introductions] So, in official New Zealand documents, how do you identify yourself ethnically ... when you fill out a form in New Zealand ... how about you..? [addresses Pakistani woman].
- [Pakistani woman pauses]
- Researcher** Do you say I am Asian, or do you say I'm Pakistani, or do you say ...when you fill out ... fill out a document in New Zealand, like immigration, or ..?
- Pakistani woman Fill the New Zealand document?
- Researcher** Yep, yes
- Pakistani woman But I always ... put it Pakistani but I originally Indian, but in a New Zealand permanent residency so we say we are perm ... New Zealand permanent resident ..
- Researcher** Aha, just, but in terms of ethnicity, ethnically, say Pakistani, or...
- Pakistani woman But, ah, now not a nationality and we are not New Zealand nationality
- Researcher** Ok...
- Pakistani woman Only permanent residents
- Researcher** [to next person] Ok...?
- Indian woman I am say New Zealand because I have permanent resident about two years
- Researcher** But when you talk about ... there's a difference between, um ,your status and your ethnicity ... like my ethnicity is New Zealand European, you know, white skin ... but you can be New Zealand Maori, or you can be New Zealand Pacific Islander, or something, and you have a choice of saying Pakistani, Indian, ... ethnically ...
- Indian woman Ah, I would say Indian
- Indian man [man] Yeah, same
- Researcher** Ok, in terms ... if there is a choice of Asian and, you know, just the general, um category of Asian, do you feel happy saying you are Asian?
- Indian woman Yes, yep

[Pakistani woman and Indian man nod]

Researcher So when you are in a social situation, when you are meeting New Zealanders, do you say I am Indian, I am Pakistani?

Indian man Yep

Researcher In a social situation...

Pakistani woman But now here is New Zealander [laughs]

Researcher No, that's good!! Ok, so how do you feel about being a New Zealand citizen, or a New Zealand permanent resident? How about you? [addresses Indian woman]

Indian woman Yeah, good, feeling good, yeah

[Pakistani woman and Indian man nod]

Researcher Ah, are there any issues that affect your feeling about belonging in New Zealand? Is there anything you feel affects you about belonging in New Zealand? Belonging in New Zealand society?

Indian man Is my feeling is a good one, long time

Researcher Ok

Indian man Yeah

Researcher So you don't have any negative feelings about ...

Indian man No, not negative

Indian woman Ah, when the someone should buy gun and like that one thing so I'm a little scare of the crime and little scare in New Zealand

Researcher Ok

Pakistani woman Good, here is good, very good ... best

Researcher Good, ok, in what ways do you feel you have participated, ah, politically in New Zealand? Do you feel you have participated politically in New Zealand?

Indian man Ah I don't think so cause ... ah ... my feeling is a good one ... is my feeling

Researcher Ok, so you have voted in New Zealand? This is your first time voting, is that right?

Pakistani woman Yes

Indian woman Yes, first time

- Researcher** All first time or you've voted before? [addresses Indian man]
- Indian man No, no first time
- Researcher** First time, oh, so all first time voters, great, ok, so how do you feel about the opportunity to vote in this election ... as a new citizen
- Indian man I ah don't think so much I'm thinking is a ... maybe there is a coming government, ah, Labour or National, is a good, everything is a good, but I ... I think so Labour is a coming ... but I'm not sure ... not sure
- Researcher** You're not sure who to vote for ... or you're not ... is that what you mean?
- Indian man I'm not sure ok is it Labour coming or National coming ... I'm not sure
- Researcher** Ok, how do you feel about voting? [addresses Indian woman]
- Indian woman Ah, I want to vote for Labour because I am thinking Labour is helping to poor people ... I am thinking National is not, ah, interested in poor people ... National is for the rich people and I am seeing the Helen Clark is everywhere in Indian shop and Indian function event so I am feeling about positive about the Helen Clark so I love Labour
- Researcher** Ok, and you're excited about being ... the possibility of voting in New Zealand?
- Indian woman Yep
- Researcher** You're excited about Saturday?
- Indian woman Yep
- Pakistani woman Yes
- Indian woman Some people say National is up but I'm thinking, no, the election is not finished so ... [laughs]
- Researcher** Ok [laughs] how do you feel about the possibility of voting on Saturday? [addresses Pakistani woman]
- Pakistani woman But, ah, I don't know more but, ah, it's a ... I like the ... I think who come, and going better to economy in New Zealand and everything for New Zealand better. He, ah, give a good service ... they give a good service
- Researcher** Ok
- Pakistani woman But I don't know who's come [laughs]

- Researcher** Ok, no, ah, just talking about interested in, ah ... interest in politics, are you interested in New Zealand politics? Are you interested in the election?
- Indian woman Yep
- Researcher** [to other participants] Yep? Yes?
- [Pakistani woman and Indian man nod when prompted]
- Researcher** Yep? Ok, do you continue to follow politics in your own ... in your home country? Do you continue to read about politics or listen to politics, to vote in your own country?
- Indian woman Ah, not me, I no ... I don't know anything about the Indian po ... in the India but now I know something and I'm talking about the politics about in class and sometime ...
- Researcher** About New Zealand politics?
- Indian woman Yes sometime I watch the TV so I know some politics and it's so interesting
- Researcher** Ok
- Pakistani woman Sometimes it's good but sometimes it's dirty politics so I ...
- Researcher** At home you mean or in ... in New Zealand?
- Pakistani woman But ah there also
- Researcher** Yeah, so do you listen to Pakistani media or read about politics at home? Are you still interested in politics at home?
- Pakistani woman No, not more interested
- Researcher** Not as much as in New Zealand?
- Pakistani woman Not my family all here
- Researcher** Ah, ok, so how about you [to Indian man]
- Indian man Yeah same ... it's the first time in New Zealand here I'm voting first time but India I'm a lot of time is voting
- Researcher** Ok, so you ... but do you still read Indian newspapers and follow what's happening in politics back home?
- Indian man Yeah, yeah
- Researcher** Ok, ah, how easy ... this is a good question for new migrants ... how easy is New Zealand politics to understand ... when you're thinking about ... you're a new ... reasonably new migrant, is it easy to understand New Zealand politics? Is it easy to understand the election?

- [everyone hesitates]
- Indian man I don't think ... it's a not easy
- Researcher** Not easy?
- Indian man No, not easy
- Researcher** What exactly ... what is difficult about ...?
- Indian man Very difficult
- Researcher** The system? The MMP system or...?
- Indian man I don't know cause it's very ... I think it's a very difficult
- Researcher** Compared with Indian ... compared with Indian politics?
- Indian man Yeah
- Researcher** Ok, same feeling? [addresses others]
- Indian woman Um, I don't know about much more politics but I am thinking it's good
- Researcher** Here?
- Indian woman Yeah
- Researcher** Ok, so you understand the two ticks, you know, two votes?
- Indian woman Yeah, I ...
- Pakistani woman Yes, one is party vote and one is ... [searches for word]
- Researcher** Electorate ... ok, so that message is getting through to migrants
- Indian woman And, ah, I like to listen to about politics in Radio Tarana
- Researcher** Oh good, that's my question...
- Indian woman It's a good way
- Researcher** That's great, ah, what would help make New Zealand politics easier to understand, for you? What ... what do you think would help you to ... to make it easier to understand New Zealand politics?
- Indian woman I'm thinking it's Radio Tarana so I can ... I see in the TV so I don't understand much more, just little, but in Radio Tarana so it's my language so I can understand everything so that's a good way
- Pakistani woman Same thing
- Researcher** Same? So your own media, you mean, or ...

- Pakistani woman Yes, our own media, in or...
- Researcher** That helps?
- Pakistani woman Yes, but I originally Indian so it's in Radio Tarana is, ah, same [laughs]
- Researcher** Ok, same for you, Radio Tarana? [to Indian man]
- Indian man Yes
- Researcher** Ok this is what my thesis is all about ... is Indian media in New Zealand so ...ok [laughs] so, ok, so what New Zealand issues do you find interesting? Anything that's being discussed at the moment ... what do you find interesting ... or what are you concerned about or ... what do you want to learn about in New Zealand in the election campaign ... anything? What affects you?
- Pakistani woman So how to vote and certain things, I think so it's knowledge for us more
- Researcher** Ok, are you concerned about crime? Law and order?
- Indian woman Mmm
- Researcher** Any other ... any other things that you want to learn about before Saturday?
- Indian woman [laughs] but actually I don't know how to vote exactly, I'm so nervous about voting
- Researcher** It's actually very easy in New Zealand
- Indian woman Yeah
- Researcher** Voting is easy
- Indian man Yes, yes
- Researcher** Ok, ah, the next question, do you think it is important to vote in New Zealand?
- Indian woman Yep
- [other participants pause]
- Researcher** Yes...yes ... or no?
- Indian man What is the question?
- Researcher** Do you think it is important to vote?
- Pakistani woman Yes, it's important

- Researcher** Like you have a ... now you are a New Zealand citizen or a permanent resident, you have the right to vote ...
- Indian woman Yes
- Researcher** So is it important that you do vote now you have the right?
- Indian woman And I want to ... I'm going for the voting so I want to take my daughter so ... so she can learn ... I can't learn in India so but she can learn here so ...
- Researcher** Ok, ah, do you continue to vote in your home country ... if you are... if you're allowed to?
- Indian woman No
- Pakistani woman No
- [Indian man shakes head]
- Researcher** Which parts of New Zealand elections and voting do you find difficult? Ah, we've kind of discussed this, like the system, the MMP system and ... so what are you afraid about voting ... just going into the polling booth or...what to do when you get in there or ...?
- Indian woman What to do
- Researcher** What to do when you get in there?
- Indian woman Yeah
- Researcher** Are you worried about the language?
- Indian woman Aaah ...
- Researcher** No problems with the language?
- Indian woman no
- Pakistani woman not now, but earlier before is more problem ... not understood English so it's more problem
- Researcher** But now can you ...?
- Pakistani woman And the accent is different
- Researcher** Ok and you have to ... do you have to spell your name when you go to the ... go into the ... oh, no, you haven't voted before, no, so you don't know ... ok... so you need to take your EasyVote card
- Indian man Yes
- Indian woman Yes, I have

- Researcher** That's really good because you don't have to spell your name, you just get the card and...
- Indian man Yes
- Indian woman Yeah
- Researcher** So remember ... ah, how well do you feel your ... ok, you are migrants ... you are from Pakistan and India, do you feel your voice is represented in the New Zealand Parliament? Do you feel that Indians are represented in the New Zealand Parliament? Do you feel Pakistanis are represented in the Parliament? Do you understand the question?
- [hesitation]
- Researcher** Do you think they speak for you?
- Pakistani woman Now we are here so I think so we ... here is a ... here Parliament is a ... I think so ... we
- Researcher** They speak for ... for your voice?
- Pakistani woman But here ... not our voice ... but here Parliament is good so we choosed a good thing
- Researcher** Ok, do you feel that Indian ... the Indian voice is represented in New Zealand Parliament?
- Indian woman No
- Researcher** No?
- Indian man Here is a different ... is different here ... New Zealand ...
- Researcher** Ok, so at the mo...
- Indian woman I'm thinking in here ... not India, not Pakistan, all in New Zealand, I'm thinking that one thing
- Researcher** Yeah, ok, so in, yeah, so if a, if say, an Indian politician got into Parliament on Saturday, for example Musuku or Prasad..
- Indian man Yeah, yeah
- Researcher** Would you feel that your voice is represented in Parliament? That they would speak for you as Indians?
- Indian man But he speak English
- Researcher** But I mean, um, they would rep...
- Indian woman Yeah, represent

- Researcher** Represent your needs...?
- Pakistani woman Represent for here
- Researcher** And your opinions and so on
- Indian man Yeah
- Researcher** ‘Cause at the moment there is just Ashraf Choudhary ...
- Indian man Yeah, yeah
- Pakistani woman Yes
- Researcher** But no other Indians¹⁰⁸ so on Saturday there is a chance that there will be more Indians in Parliament, do you feel that would be a good thing?
- Indian man Yeah
- Indian woman Yes, good
- Pakistani woman Yes
- Researcher** Ok, right, um, so how well do you think New Zealand Parliament represent ... New Zealand is becoming much more multicultural
- Indian man Yeah
- Researcher** You know, there are lots of nationalities in New Zealand now, do you think the New Zealand Parliament represents all those voices?
- [hesitation]
- Researcher** Or do you think it’s still quite...
- Indian man Not all of them
- Indian woman No ... I’m thinking not quite
- Researcher** Ok, not quite? Same?
- Indian man Same, yeah
- Researcher** Same ... so it could be *more* representative
- Indian man Yes
- Researcher** Ok, now talking about the media, which you’ve already mentioned Radio Tarana, ok, do you listen to, or read local South Asian media ... Radio Tarana, *Indian Newslink*, *the Dawn*, *Kuk Samachar* ...?

¹⁰⁸ The phrase ‘no *other* Indians’ was used here to simplify discussion in recognition of the level of proficiency of the participants. Member of Parliament Ashraf Choudhary is Pakistani.

- Indian woman More I like, I like Radio Tarana, so I can doing my work too and listen too, and it's easy for me
- Researcher** Ok, and you can listen to Hindi and ... do you listen to Parmjeet's programme on Sunday night?
- Indian man Yes
- Indian woman Oh, yeah, yeah, yeah, last week I listen the Bakshi one programme
- Researcher** Yeah, ok, um, so is that the media you listen to most ... you access most frequently ... radio? Do you read Indian Newslink or Kuk Samachar?
- Indian man Kuk Samachar
- Researcher** You read Kuk Samachar?
- Indian man Yeah, sometimes
- Researcher** You read Kuk Samachar? [to Indian woman]
- Indian woman No, I just listen
- Researcher** Just listen? And do you read the Dawn or Kuk Samachar
- Pakistani woman Yes, sometimes Kuk Samachar, radio also
- Researcher** Radio Tarana?
- Pakistani woman Yeah and make ... and G3 also ... it's a India ...
- Researcher** Indian TV?
- Pakistani woman Not Indian TV, it's ah Indian news...
- Researcher** Oh!
- Pakistani woman Indian newspaper
- Researcher** Oh, newspaper, ok, ah what information are you most interested in getting from South Asian media in New Zealand? What's the ... what's the reason you listen to it the most? Just cause of the language? Because you can understand it? Or do you want to find out political information from Radio Tarana?
- Indian woman Yeah, I first ah the last week I seen the Bakshi one but I can't understand so I want to know what, ah, what happened this topic and so that's why
- Researcher** Oh, yes, so you listened to Parmjeet's ..? On Parmjeet's programme, the whole programme was about Bakshi
- Indian woman Yeah, yeah [laughs]

- Researcher** And people were phoning in about Bakshi
- Indian woman And, yeah, and one listener say, oh we are not talking about Mr Bakshi because Mr Bakshi is Indian so the Parmjeet say we are talking about the Winston Peters then they doing that thing and we are talking about he, then why not we are talking about Mr Bakshi because he's Indian, I Indian doing when thing then I have to talking about that thing to Indian too
- Researcher** Yes, she was very good actually ... ah, so when you think about South Asian media, would you be more likely to write a letter to the editor ... the Indian Newslink or Kuk Samachar ... than to, for example, the New Zealand Herald? If you want to write ... you know, letter to the Editor? When you ... you have an opinion and you're ... angry about something and want to write to the newspaper ... would you feel more comfortable writing to Indian Newslink than New Zealand Herald? Would you feel more confident?
- Indian woman No, [hesitates] I'm thinking...
- Researcher** You wouldn't do it?
- Indian woman No, I want to say something so I say to Radio Tarana, it's best
- Researcher** Oh Tarana
- Indian woman Yeah
- Researcher** Is that because it's in Hindi?
- Indian woman Yes
- Researcher** Ok, so have you ever written a letter to Indian Newslink or Kuk Samachar or ...?
- Pakistani woman No
- Researcher** Have you ever phoned Radio Tarana? On the, the ...you know, say, when Parmjeet says please phone, phone my programme, have you ever phoned?
- Indian woman Ah, I don't know about politics so I'm not
- Researcher** Ok, but would you feel more comfortable phoning Radio Tarana than, for example, Newstalk ZB?
- Indian woman Yes, comfortable
- Pakistani woman Yeah
- Researcher** Same?
- Indian man Mmm

- Researcher** Because it's in Hindi?
- Indian woman Yes
- Researcher** [to Indian man] Same?
- Indian man Yes
- Pakistani woman But I not, want ah, more information for certain thing or politicians or ...
- Researcher** Ok, so how do you feel about having South Asian media in New Zealand? Do you think it's a good thing?
- Indian woman Yep
- Researcher** Is it a really important thing?
- Indian woman Yep
- Researcher** Yep? Ah how interested are you in the election on Saturday? Are you very, very interested or medium or...?
- Indian woman Yep, I'm much interested, I have a chance to vote so happy to do it
- Researcher** [to Pakistani woman] Very interested?
- Pakistani woman Yes, we have chance and we get a good ...
- Researcher** Oh, ok, do you listen to mainstream media about the election at all? Or do you just listen to Radio Tarana? If you want to know about the election ... I know you talk about it here at school ... do you listen to Newstalk ZB or Radio Live or ...anything about the election? Do you watch TV1 or TV3?
- Indian woman Ah, I watch the TV 1 too but I understand a little but I can't understand more, so...
- Researcher** So Tarana is better because it's in Hindi?
- Indian man Yes
- Indian woman Yes
- Pakistani woman And here at school so we understood everything more and more ...you take the programme?
- Researcher** Oh, which one?
- Pakistani woman Are you went on that one? [referring to Elections NZ Electoral Education Roadshow]
- Researcher** Oh, yes, it was me!
- [everyone laughs]

- Researcher** But I have a different hat on today! That was an Electoral Commission hat, now I am a student [laughs]. So you were here that day?
- Pakistani woman Yes!
- Researcher** Oh, yes, I have a photo of you [referring to photo and article in the Western Leader]
- Indian woman Yeah, I have too
- Researcher** It was in the ... it was in the ... what was the name of the paper?
- Pakistani woman Central Leader
- Researcher** Yes, they sent me a picture ... ah, so, do you think it's important for Radio Tarana and Kuk Samachar and Indian Newslink, for example, provide information about the election? To the Indian migrants and Pakistani migrants, and so on? Is it important?
- Indian woman Yeah
- Researcher** Ok, and is that because it's using ... for example, because it's in Hindi? That makes a difference? You need the information in Hindi?
- Indian woman Yep, yeah
- Indian man [nods]
- Pakistani woman [nods]
- Researcher** Ok, ah, do you feel that the mainstream media, for example NZ Herald, TV 2, TV 3, um, Radio Live, Newstalk ZB, do you feel that they include migrants in, you know, talking about politics and so on, or do you feel a bit ... outside?
- Indian man No I'm feeling this is ah ...
- Researcher** They include?
- Indian man Yep
- Researcher** So mainstream media include migrants in the news and in the politics?
- Indian man Yep
- Researcher** [to other two participants] you agree?
- Indian woman Yep
- Pakistani woman [nods]

- Researcher** Ok, um, and in terms of the election and, and politics, do you feel that your, um, the Indians and Pakistanis and Sri Lankans, and so on, are represented in the media? Do you feel your voice ... do you feel like you are, um, your opinions are represented in the mainstream media? Do you understand the question? Like, are there ... are there stories about Indian migrants and politics, are there stories about...
- Indian man Yes
- Researcher** Political candidates in the mainstream media, do you think?
- Indian woman Yeah
- Researcher** Yep? Enough?
- Indian woman Yep
- Researcher** But still, you access Indian media? You prefer ...
- Pakistani woman But, ah,
- Researcher** You prefer to acc... you prefer to listen to Radio Tarana, you prefer to read Indian Newslink and so on?
- Pakistani woman But, ah, on a TV programme, it's a ... we show in TV programme so we have knowledge with ...
- Researcher** On TV1 and TV3, you mean?
- Pakistani woman Yes, so it's good
- Researcher** Do you understand, like, for example, the leaders' debate last night, do you understand what they're talking about?
- Indian man Yep
- Pakistani woman Yep
- Researcher** Yep? You understand the issues ... the English is not too difficult?
- Pakistani woman It's a little bit difficult but...
- Researcher** Generally you understand
- Pakistani woman Generally understand ... and ah, something is not understood but, ah
- Researcher** Ok, alright, so just thinking about Indian media, South Asian media, and the election on Saturday, do you feel like most of your information about the election came from Radio Tarana?
- Indian woman Aah ... [hesitates]
- Researcher** Most of the information that you wanted to get together came from Radio Tarana ... or Indian Newslink ... or half and half?

- Indian woman I'm thinking yes
- Researcher** mainly Radio Tarana?
- Indian woman yes
- Researcher** [to Indian man and Pakistani woman] Same?
- Indian man No, ah ...
- Researcher** Half and half?
- Indian man Yep
- Pakistani woman Not more, less than half but not more and more, why [because] it's not all candidates and issues...
- Researcher** No? It's just the mainly the Indian...
- Pakistani woman Mainly yes
- Researcher** And Helen Clark and John Key have been interviewed on Parmjeet's programme
- Pakistani woman Only the two parties so it's a come on to one by one so we see on TV and understood everything so it's good
- Researcher** Great, well thankyou. Is there anything you want to add? To tell me ... those are the thirty questions, and as you can see, my interest is in media, South Asian media, how do they, how do they help you to understand the election, how do they help you to feel like New Zealand citizens, like voters, you know, do they help you more than mainstream media, that's my, that's my focus ... of my thesis...
- [participants indicate there are no questions]
- Researcher** No? No questions? Well, thankyou all for your participation. It has been very valuable.

Appendix 4.3

Focus Group Two

Thursday 6 November 2008

Community Centre, South Auckland, at 3pm

- Researcher** So, as I said, I'm looking at ethnic media in New Zealand and in particular South Asian media and the way that it engages the South Asian community in politics and in the election and in voting, ok, so the first two questions are about identity as new New Zealanders, um, so how do you identify yourself ethnically in official New Zealand documents?
- Mrs N [translates in Hindi]
- Mrs I Indian, Indian, every time I think Indian
- Mr L Sometime I identify myself as South Asian and sometime as Pakistani, depending upon the question, the situation
- Mrs R [Mr L answers for Mrs R] Same [Pakistani]
- Researcher** And when you are in a social situation, when you are talking to Kiwis, or you know, a group of migrants, is it the same answer or do you change your answer?
- Mrs I Indian, every time it's Indian
- Mr L I say sometime as required South Asian, or if there's want to be more specific, I call as Pakistani
- Mrs R same
- Researcher** Same, ok, now thinking about participation and belonging in New Zealand as 'new New Zealanders', um, I'll just start here first, [Mrs R] how do you feel about being a New Zealand citizen or a permanent resident?
- Mrs R I feel is good, um New Zealand is very good, I like New Zealand, very nice, peaceful, beautiful, very nice
- Mr L Exactly, it's really tranquil, peaceful nice and decent place and without any you know skirmishes and problems which are really all around and particular hunger and war and disturbances and those kind of things like hate and prejudices so really you know wonderful place
- Mrs I think very good

Researcher Still talking about belonging, are there any issues that affect your feeling about belonging in New Zealand? [Mrs I]do you want to start?

Mrs I No

Mr L Yes ... I mean I'm ... I mean I'm reasonably qualified, and experienced far more better than so many people those who are local around this place and my those qualifications although formally authenticated, and verified from the New Zealand Qualifications Authority, and my experience is not at all recognised around this place so throughout my stay around this place although I have tried to labour on, I am not appreciated, not been given a place in the society, as per my ... those qualifications and experience. Unfortunately, I had and I am working under those people those who are, I mean, like those I have already managed and commanded about hundreds of them like them and those people are my in charge at this place, and I have told them, without mincing a word even, I have told them that I have been in such position where I can run this whole organisation and I know it at this stage that what all is going around me, alright, and I informed them. Unfortunate situation is this, despite knowing everything, they still have made me to work under those the downest, I mean the lowest state of life in this country, that I must stay and I shouldn't come up and they have not recognised it. Stayed, sat back and I must add into it ... New Zealand is not MIS-using only, New Zealand is DIS-using the talent of the migrants, the people though they have come from abroad, even in the Ethnic Council meetings, I have spoken about this thing, there's a ... er... lot of prejudice, very less openly but definitely in the minds, under the currents, under the tables, and all over the society, they just don't recognise it, they just do not open their minds, People those who are here let's say at some stage, of course we are not undermining their experience and their situation and we are not come here to overrule them. To snatch their bread and butter, we just need a reasonable, decent recognition according to one's own, qualifications and experience and situation. Please do not hurt them, do not disrespect them, do not underestimate them, and do not think that because they have landed here, they must be, you know, robbed and they must be humiliated, and insulted, and that's what is going on and this feeling I have seen because I'm quite well-connected, and all of my South Asian society, which includes yes in New Zealand and in Auckland, and [Mrs N] knows it, I am very well-connected with my Indian people, with my Pakistani, my Bangladeshi, and other South Asian which is otherwise called as SARC region, South Asian Regional Co-operation, SARC we call it, seven countries, we call it as SARC region as well. So same feeling is there with everyone, so people are being DISused, rather than MISused, there's no depth of talent, there's no depth of experience, not at all anywhere, but people are definitely and because of this thing there is definitely there I mean ill-feeling and resentment, and recently you might have seen that people are flying away, from New Zealand

Researcher New migrants, you mean?

- Mr L Yes, they are going away after they have stayed here for couple of years, and they are flying, I mean going away from this place. This is one big reason, because, see the prime thing is, I told to my workplace people even, first of all I need to feed myself and my children, second is that I need a respect, for the society we have come [from] respect is greater at times even more than your bread and butter, and we definitely need respect, so people are not respected, not at all, ... see, my place, my workplace, they know that who was I ... and that is a more, you know, a more disturbing fact for me, if I had not told them, I mean, I mean they know it now, it would have been much better for me, because then I would not have been hurt, that they know that this person is qualified so and so engineer, this is qualified so and so person, his person is a doctor, this person was engineer, they know, those persons, all those people, are working under those people who are here for the last twenty years, they've been promoted from cleaner to custodian and now team in charge, and all these people whom about I am mentioning, I'm working under them now, so how you feel this thing, you don't feel comfortable but you are killing yourself definitely, you know specially on the subject of once you say though your personal dignity, ego, that is being you know, scratched –[eroded] yes, eroded, certainly,
- Mrs N more questions please
- Researcher,** [addressing Mrs R] ok, so do you ...
- [Mr L interrupts] No, she can't speak that much, she barely can you know, talk
- Researcher** Do you have a ... do you have a similar...?
- [Mr L interrupts] Similar, no, she lives with me, rather I live with her, and I know we keep talking and she has feelings [similar] ... let me speak to you, sorry, I was a colonel in may place, so I mean equalling to that, I was a fairly big rank and fairly experienced person, you think I can't, I mean I'm married, you think I can't hold that, I mean she has seen me in my life, and I have travelled overseas, I've been in abroad particular course things like that, ... who cares, you are dubbed as I'm just working as security guard, [yeah, ok] you can imagine the difference and the ego being eroded
- [yes]
- and hurt around so that's the big reason you are losing people and it is not a misuse only, it is a disuse as well ... sorry
- Researcher** Ok so that was talking about belonging, so similar ideas, obviously, with your wife?
- Mr L Of course
- Researcher** So next question, in what ways do you feel you HAVE participated or DO participate politically in New Zealand [to Mrs I]

[Private discussion in Hindi between interpreter and all three participants – discussing political parties and voting - total 1 minute including interruptions in English]

Mr L Ah, if I can reply now, if I can speak for her, [Mrs R] is it ok?

[Private discussion continues in Hindi]

Mr L She does vote, yes, she tells others as well, definitely

Researcher Not only general elections, like this Saturday, but also local government elections

Mr L She definitely votes herself and she tells any person who comes ask to them that who is good and why it is good and then accordingly she tries to inspire them. She is doing definitely I know

Researcher So same, you're more active than...

Mr L 100 percent I am, and I do, I do make a comparative, not just superficially, I make a proper comparative

Researcher So you inform yourself, you read, about the candidates ...?

Mr L Yes, I read a lot, I write, I speak, and I, I mean, I get into proper discussions with my work colleagues, with other people also

Researcher Ok, is that to learn – is that to help influence others or is that to help get people involved or is that...

Mr L Get people involved, yes

Researcher So are they mainly migrants you're talking about or...?

Mr L No they are mixed all kind of mixed people

Mrs I By supporting a party, Yes

Researcher And voting obviously in local body, ah council elections too?

Mrs I Yes

Researcher And then in the general election this Saturday?

Mrs I Yes

Researcher Thinking about New Zealand politics, both the general election and local body, how interested are you, [Mrs I] how interested are you in New Zealand politics?

[interpreter translates]

Researcher VERY interested, medium...?

Mrs I Ok

Researcher [to Mr L] Same? Oh you're VERY interested!

Mr L Very much

Researcher [Mrs R] And...? Very interested?

Mrs R Yes,

Researcher Ok, um, do you continue to follow politics in your home country?

[Mr L interprets]

Mrs R Yes

Researcher Same?

Mr L 100 percent

Mrs I Yes, same

Researcher So just thinking about politics in your home country, how do you access information, is it through the Internet, or is it through, do you receive overseas newspapers, or...?

Mr L Here, you are talking about?

Researcher Yeah, living here and...

[interpreter translates]

Mr L Ah, we speak on telephone, we get Internet papers I mean scan the papers, or we just sit in the groups and chat and we know, say things coming up

Researcher About Pakistani politics?

Mr L Yes, or as TV or something

Mrs I Internet and Indian newspaper

Researcher Ok, so it's actually an Indian-based newspaper that comes to New Zealand?

Mrs I Yes

Researcher Ok, um, how easy is New Zealand politics to understand? Thinking about when you first arrived in New Zealand as a migrant, how easy was New Zealand politics to understand?

Mr L It's very easy. It's far more convenient, as we have a very much first-hand experience overseas, particularly in me, my case, and I have I mean different countries and I'm very much interested in these kinds of things, social and political activities, so I can very confidently say

it's a much easier, to the point and straight forward and absolutely clear

Mrs R Yes

Researcher Same answer?

Mrs R Yes

Mrs I Yes

Mr L Yes, very easy

Researcher So the system was easier to understand, the news, what you saw on the news was easy to understand, and same...? [to Mrs R]

Mr L Very easy

Mrs R Yes, very easy

Researcher Ok, um, is there anything that would help make it easier, or do you not need it to be easier?

Mr L It's perfectly ok. It's ok

Researcher For example, MMP?

Mr L No fine, it's not a problem

[Interpreter joins discussion]

Mrs N Well, I don't know if you are including me or not, but I found it very difficult to understand MMP

Researcher Yes, and you're not the only one!

Mrs N And I got myself educated, I went to an MP and said "please explain it to me, I am not finding it easy"... I had to so.

Researcher Oh, good on you!

Mrs N And after coming to this role of [name of role withheld], I just decided to educate the community and we did hold some workshops

Researcher Yes, I was here! [laughs]

Mr L No, this is good system basically, in the case that ah, we were intending to put this system in place in our country back home

Researcher MMP?

Mr L Yes

Researcher Or a form of ... a form of proportional representation?

- Mr L Yes, exactly, proportional representation, because this has been practised in Turkey as well
- Researcher** Yep
- Mr L and some of the other places so, the kind of you know politics and mud-slinging and leg-pulling and you know those kind of things we have in our area, so we, yes, ...
- [New participant enters room]
- Researcher** oh, hello [Mrs K]
- Mr L We thought that it was required really, so I, straight away I could understand because I had some previous knowledge of proportional representation so I knew...
- Researcher** [explaining to new participant] Ok, right, um, we're just in the middle of our questions so that's fine, we'll just keep, if that's ok because [Mrs N] has to go, so we have to keep going, what time do you have to leave [Mrs N]?
- Mrs N Four
- Researcher** Um, now, question 10, which New Zealand issues or public debate, for example at the moment, do you find interesting, um [Mrs I]?
- [interpreter translates]
- Researcher** Interesting or challenging or really...?
- Mr L Can I say before she keeps talking?
- Researcher** Yep
- Mr L Ok, the top of the line is – law and order and crimes, how to check it, and of course, give a reasonable ah latitude, a reasonable some kind of ah, permission or responsibility for self-defence and there you cannot really ah, ah single it out the person who's being attacked, or who's been attacked, and who's under threat that he should you know start going according to the book, and I mean ah start looking at it, how much force I have to use it, in that given situation and in the heat of that momentum, it's simply impossible that you can exactly draw a line, and who would ascertain it, what is the line, who would ascertain it, that is very important again, and I mean it's a very sta ... thing, your home is being attacked,
- Researcher** Or your business, yeah,
- Mr L Business, personally you are under attack and you start thinking should I, or should I not, whether that person will give you that much of time to react and not react, they will stab you and go away, so how you go then from there on.

- Researcher** So are you saying it's difficult to make – to write down the law, what is the line?
- Mr L And there you keep waiting for the police, does police people have in every home, place and person, immediate response? Like you call and it goes to them that person is under attack, they may be busy and they are definitely busy and very much at times, and they are not immediately able to help you or attend to you and the culprit, you the criminal is not going to wait it, is not wait or is not going to let you, you know, think second time in that kind of situation, so you have to, you know, give a right of self-defence, straight away, to the individual, to protect one's own self, one thing. Secondly, that people those who are contributing their things, maybe it is superannuation, it's a KiwiSaver, or any other things come up at any some stage later on, no incoming government, and no incoming administration must have, they must not infringe on it, in on it, people have given a mandate,
- Researcher** No interfering?
- Mr L Not interfering, yes, that's very important, I just it's a simply ridiculous, today we are contributing suppose, for example, for our KiwiSaver, nobody should have a right to do, I will cut this much and I will do that much and I will, I mean this thing so they should initially, suppose 700,000 people have contributed, they should give them a proper write-up, a proper thing, take their consent, take their, I mean, opinion, ok, we are going to cut it, or we want to cut it, this is our plan, what is your opinion, are you agree with it, do you agree with it, or you don't agree?
- Researcher** Are you talking about politicians who are going to be in power?
- Mr L Yes, exactly, why not, that's my money, I am contributing to that, how the hell they have the right, to do it, ok we'll cut this much and we'll put there and we'll put here, it's a daylight robbery, people are – those who are contributing
- Mrs N [interrupts] These issues are interesting to you but these issues they are actually concerning, we can go into ... you are interested in this but...
- Mr L Yes, I am interested, that is what I am saying...
- Mrs I But there are other persons
- Researcher** Ok, so law and order, taxation, self-defence, law and order and self-defence, taxation KiwiSaver, [Mrs I]?
- Mrs I Women issues, family violence issues
- Researcher** Ok, so women, family violence, ...
- Mrs N And crime, of course
- Researcher** And crime, so law and order, is crime number one?

Mr L Of course, it's number one, definitely,

Researcher [to Mrs R] Same?

Mrs R Same, yes

Mrs I Yes

Researcher Same, crime, law and order, self-defence, and women's issues, mainly family violence? Yes ok, right so we have to move on a little bit more quickly. Talking about voting in New Zealand – do you think it's important to vote in New Zealand?

Mr L Very important

[Everybody together] Very important

Researcher Ok, yes everybody, do you continue to vote in your home country, if you are eligible?

Mr L From here we don't vote

Researcher You don't, ok, not eligible?

Mr L No, we are eligible but we don't

Researcher You can't?

Mr L No

Mrs N Why we can't?

Mrs K [new participant joins discussion] Why not?

Mrs N Because you're not New Zealand

Mrs K In New Zealand can vote

Mr L No, if we are there,...

Researcher In India?

Mrs K In India can vote

Mr L If you are in India only then you can vote but from here you can't

Researcher In New Zealand can you vote in Indian elections?

Mr L No

Mrs K Oh, no

Mr L You need to be present there

- Mrs K If you have a dual citizenship, you can
- Mr L Even then you need to be present there
- Researcher** Oh, ok, so you can't vote in New Zealand but you can if you are in India
- Mr L Your presence is important
- Researcher** Which aspects of New Zealand elections and voting do you find challenging, if any?
- Mr L It's a very simple, straight-forward, very clear
- Researcher** Are there any parts of this election this Saturday that you're thinking ooh, that's a bit, that's hard?
- Mrs I No
- Mrs N For me it's hard to choose ... the candidates [laughs]
- Researcher** Ok, so the choosing is ... really the only thing that's hard is the choosing
- Mrs N Yes
- Researcher** Ok, and a lot of...
- Mr L There's no hard at all for me. It's a very simple straight-forward, absolutely
- Researcher** Ok, so that's your opinion, everyone's allowed an opinion
- Mr L Absolutely, yes
- Researcher** Ok, and how well do you feel your interests and opinions are being represented by your local Member of Parliament ... and when I say "your" I mean as migrants, how well do you feel migrants' opinions are represented by your local Member of Parliament?
- Mrs K I think it's ok
- Mrs N I think it's important
- Researcher** Do you think your local Member of Parliament speaks for migrant communities?
- Mr L Yes, definitely
- Researcher** Represents your opinions in Parliament?
- Mrs K Yes
- Mrs I Okay

- Researcher** And how well do you think New Zealand's Parliament represents New Zealand's ethnically diverse population?
- Mr L Good
- Researcher** We're a very multicultural society now. Does our Parliament represent that?
- Mrs I Yes
- Mr L It's reasonable
- Mrs N It should be more, it should be more
- Mrs K Especially with the target for next year
- Researcher** So you think after Saturday, Parliament might be more ethnically diverse?
- Mrs I I would like to see women migrants representing more in Parliament
- Researcher** That's a good point, a good discussion point, ok, now just looking at question sixteen, the media, and I'm talking about Asian, South Asian media now, do you access New Zealand-based South Asian media ... in New Zealand, so for example, Radio Tarana, Apna, *Indian Newslink*, *Kuk Samachar* ...?
- Mrs I yes
- Researcher** Do you all access South Asian media?
- Mr L It's ok
- Researcher** Do you prefer English-language South Asian media or your own language South Asian media?
- Mr L Both of them
- Mrs I Both of them
- Researcher** So you access all of it?
- Everyone Yes
- Researcher** You listen to Radio Tarana?
- Everyone Yes
- Researcher** Listen to Apna?
- Everyone Yes
- Mrs N [to Mr L] Do you have Urdu newspapers?
- Mr L No

- Mrs K *The Dawn!*
- Mrs N You can't read in Punjabi?
- Mr L No
- Mrs K Even Dawn?
- Researcher** *The Dawn* is in English.
- Mrs I *The Dawn* is English but Indian community newspaper, *Newslink* is also Indian community papers
- Mrs K But some of them, they read Punjabi also, Pakistanis
- Mrs I It's ah good in Punjabi, yes
- Mrs N Reading, yes, but speaking, I don't know about it...
- [Conversation all together in Hindi]
- Mrs N We are going over time
- Researcher** No that's fine, that's fine, ok, so which, all of you, which local South Asian media do you access most frequently? Which do you read or listen to the most?
- Mr L Apna, radio is Apna or Tarana,
- Researcher** You listen to Apna more than Tarana?
- Mr L No, mainly equally you can say, yeah, just same
- Mrs R Yes,
- Mrs I Tarana
- Mr L English Indian Newslink and Tarana, those kind of ...
- Researcher** Oh, so all equal?
- Mr L Yes
- Mrs I Tarana
- Researcher** Tarana the most? You listen to Tarana the most? Do you get your news from ...?
- Mrs I Sometime 990
- Mr L Apna, that's called Apna
- Mrs N For me it's Tarana and Kuk

- Mrs K Tarana and Kuk
- Researcher** Tarana and Kuk Samachar?
- Mrs K Yes
- Researcher** Which information are you most interested in sourcing or obtaining from ... why do you access South Asian media? What is the main reason?
- Mrs K I think language, naturally you go to your own language
- Researcher** And what information do you want to get from it that you perhaps wouldn't get from mainstream media?
- Mrs K News
- Mrs N Yes, news
- Mrs I I think news and...
- Mr L But mainstream media...
- Mrs K They contain all type of message
- Researcher** So it's the language that is the key reason
- Mrs I The language, yes
- Mr L It's not the language only, but the contents as well, because in the mainstream media, you find their coverage is proportionately, of course, I mean, very less for us, even if you go to the New Zealand Herald, the page which they call as "world," ok, you will find in one corner one small news or any news which is of their interest, I mean media also has an interest, not for the public's sake, they want to highlight and project some issue which might not be very much interest of me, but it is from media point of view their interest, and they will, you know, explain and highlight it in a more, ah, I mean a broader way as compared with the one which really I every day read, so that way we focus on I mean the other those small community newspapers ... where they
- Researcher** You mean the, you mean the English the ... like Manukau Courier or...?
- Mr L No not at all Manukau doesn't care, I mean cover us
- Researcher** Do you mean the South Asian media?
- Mr L South Asian, yes
- Researcher** Ok
- Mr L South Asian papers like, ah, you know, there are a few in English and a few in this, ah, Punjabi

- Mrs N When you said why do we access to this, for me radio is for entertainment and political debates, and the newspaper is because it contains the language
- Mrs K The language and basically it's the script and most of what I have experienced of this, most of people want their children to access this script, you know,
- Researcher** The Hindi and Punjabi script?
- Mrs N No, not only this ...
- Mrs K Yes because the children go to the temples, and to the mosque and Gurudwara for the learning language
- Researcher** Ok
- Mrs K Because language also
- Researcher** So that's interesting [Mrs N] you said about political information, so you access Tarana for entertainment and political information
- Mrs N Yes, two things, yes
- Researcher** And same? [to others]
- Mrs N And read the newspaper, let me finish please, because this is ... the news I can get on Internet also maybe or somewhere but to read it and sometimes the community news which no other paper is covering it
- Mrs K It covers...
- Mrs N Those community news covers those things and I would like, I would really appreciate if something from *Kuk* or *Indian Newslink* or *Dawn*, the ethnic newspapers, if one spread is introduced in *NZ Herald* at one stage
- Researcher** That would be a real milestone for New Zealand media, yeah ok, we'd better press on , ah no that's good, ah, thinking about writing a letter to the editor, and thinking about the media that we have discussed, would you be more likely to write a letter to the editor to, for example, *Kuk Samachar* or *Indian Newslink* or the *Dawn* than, for example, the *New Zealand Herald*? Would you be more likely ...
- Mr L if I have to write a letter any some stage, I would write to *New Zealand Herald*
- Researcher** Ok, and ...? [inviting comment from Mrs R]
- Mr L [responds] She will follow me
- Mrs N *New Zealand Herald*
- Mrs K Yes

- Researcher** *New Zealand Herald?* So mainstream media. [Mrs I], would you ...
- Mrs I *New Zealand Herald* sometime ... need to other our community so ...
- Researcher** So you would, so 50-50 maybe?
- Mrs I Yes
- Mrs K Depends on what sort of material, what subject you want to ...
- Researcher** Depends on the issue...?
- Mrs K Yes, if it's, a matter to go to the mainstream,
- Researcher** For example, law and order?
- Mrs K Definitely, definitely goes to the mainstream, not only law and order because it's every people cover that, even ethnic, ethnic people also cover that
- Researcher** Yeah, ok
- Mrs I Depend on the situation
- Mrs K Yes, it depend on the situation
- Researcher** Can you give me an example? Like, what issue would you be more likely to write to *Kuk Samachar* ...
- Mrs I Sometime our own community issues
- Researcher** Ok
- Mrs I So ...
- Researcher** So if it's a nationwide issue?
- Mrs K A nationwide issue should go to the *New Zealand Herald*
- Researcher** *New Zealand Herald*, and that's because you want your voice heard by the mainstream?
- Mrs K Yes
- Researcher** If it is a community issue, it's more like a community discussion?
- Mrs K Yes
- Researcher** [to Mr L] Ok, and it's the same for you?
- Mr L Yes
- Researcher** And it's the same, for example, would you be more likely to phone, for example, Radio Tarana, you know Parmjeet's programme, she

invites you to phone in about political issues, would you be more likely to phone her programme than, Newstalk ZB, about politics, or is the same ...

- Mrs K No, no it's a ... people talk to the Newstalk, it's depend on ...
- Mrs N The mainstream language like barrier
- Researcher** Yeah? So you would feel more comfortable phoning and speaking in Hindi?
- Mrs N Yes
- Mrs K Of course
- Mrs I Yes
- Mrs K There's one more thing I would like to say so, what is like a law and order, and it's a crime, if we want to go to the mainstream also, and discuss in their own media also
- Researcher** Ok, so, the language would be an attraction for phone-in Radio Tarana or Apna,
- Mrs N Yes, Tarana or Apna, yes
- Researcher** Ok, and if you were a business, if you had a business in New Zealand, would you be more likely to advertise in South Asian media than the mainstream media?
- Mr L That's right
- Researcher** You would?
- Mr L Yes
- Mrs K Depends on what you are advertising, depends on the target
- Researcher** So speaking on behalf of the media, you would say you have...
- Mrs K Yeah, because it's depend on the people come to us, even the mainstream people also come to us
- Researcher** Yes
- Mrs K It's depend on the what sort of product you are going to sell, you know, it's a business one, you know, commercial
- Researcher** Yep, so how do you all feel about the existence of South Asian media in New Zealand? Do you have a strong feeling about it, that's important? It's a vital connection?
- Mr L Yes it is important, it's a vital connection and it is still in the process of development.

- Researcher** Evolving?
- Mr L Evolving, yes
- Researcher** Where do you see it going? Do you see it...?
- Mr L We'll see a future as real definitely promising, and it will have a, I mean a strong impact on the South Asian community
- Mrs K I feel so there's more, we need more media
- Researcher** If we had more South Asian media, would it become more um, segmented, you know, diluted?
- Mrs K No, not exactly because even Urdu language you don't have any, Pakistani they don't have any
- Researcher** So we don't have a Pakistani-language media in New Zealand ...
- Mrs K No, maybe one TV programme, I think, I'm not sure but we don't have any script, you know
- Mrs N Well certainly we need, want more, Kirsten, I would like to see Urdu newspaper coming
- Mrs K Mmm
- Mr L Now, I'm grateful for her I mean, ah, sentiments and passion and I ... but at any some stage, because it's a comparatively small community, at any some stage if there is any kind of you know, effort, I would like to integrate with Kuk and Punjabi, any of the Punjabi papers.
- Researcher** So you already have *Kuk Punjabi* and *Kuk Hindi*
- Mrs N *Kuk English* could be [laughs]
- Mr L I have already an offer, standing offer from the Kuk management.
- Researcher** Ok, so it would be a subsidiary paper?
- Mr L Yes, exactly, exactly that is more appropriate
- Researcher** Just moving on, how interested are you all in this year's election?
- Mr L Very much
- Mrs K Oh, very much, yes
- Mrs I yeah, very interesting
- Researcher** Very interested, ok, so is there any reason ... so is this your first time voting?
- Mr L second

Researcher [to Mrs R] Second?

Mrs R Yes

Researcher [going round pointing] Second? Second? First time voting? Or second time voting?

Mrs K No, my one is the fourth or fifth time

Researcher Oh, ok, are you more interested this year than any other year?

Mrs I Yeah, this year important

Researcher Is that because of the candidates?

Mrs K Yeah, it's a very...

Researcher More ethnic?

Mrs K Yeah, of course

Researcher Candidates, and that's why you're more interested, or is it the issues?

Mrs K Issues also

Mr L Both

Researcher So a combination of both, ok?

Mr L Yes

Mrs K Yes

Researcher Hello, come in [husband of Mrs N enters room]

Mr B Hello, good afternoon

Researcher Nice to meet you

Mr B Likewise

Researcher [explaining reason for length of interview] Lots of talking!

Mr B Oh, ok

Researcher So, just thinking about the election, which media do you go to most for information, mainstream or South Asian, or both – depends on the ..?

Mr L Mainstream, mostly

Mrs R Yes

Researcher Same or ... definitely mainstream?

Mrs R Yes

Mr L [interrupts] Yes, she's a ... mainly TV

Researcher One News, 3 News?

Mr L Yes

Researcher [Mrs I]? Both

Mrs I Both, yes

Researcher So, for example, do you listen to Radio Tarana's political programme? You listen to the politicians, the interviews with the politicians?

Mrs K Yeah, yes

[Conversation all together in Hindi]

Researcher So you listen to...?

Mr B So far as Indian points of view are concerned, I listen to Radio Tarana because they are Indian-oriented questions

Researcher Ok, and Indian-oriented candidates, as well, that they're featuring?

Mr B Oh, they could be there because, you know, sometimes Helen Clark is on there and ...

Researcher And John Key...

Mr B And other leaders are, and John Key was on the air, so ...

Researcher Do you feel that the questions that Helen Clark and John Key are asked relate to South Asian interests?

Mr B Yes, more or less

Researcher Ok, so more so than in the mainstream media?

Mr B Yes, but so far as watching TV's concerned, I always go for one and Channel Three

Researcher So mainstream media, ok

Mr B Yeah

Mr L Sorry Kirsten, I have to go [leaves temporarily]

Researcher Oh, ok, that's fine, where are we, ok, so question number 26, do you feel it is important for South Asian media to provide information about the election, voting, and political participation ... yes? Do you

think it's important that South Asian media inform people about the election, inform people about the candidates?

Mrs K Yes

Mr B I feel it is their prime duty to do so

Researcher [Mrs I] Same?

Mrs I Yes

Researcher Ok, so it is the role of the ethnic media to do that?

Mr B Yes

Researcher And they should take that seriously? Should take that responsibility?

Mrs K Yes

Researcher Do you feel the mainstream media represent and engage the South Asian community in New Zealand?

Mr B They do take us on board but still much needs to be done

Mrs N I feel the same – more...

Researcher More needs to be done? Representation?

Mrs N Representation, involvement, engagement...

Mrs K I think I always go for that, for my other point of view. When we go for the radio news or the national news or whatever, naturally we go to the mainstream

Researcher Ok

Mr B I give you one example – yesterday I was watching Helen and John Key on TV, it was the final debate and I was just sorry to see that there was, ah, no South Asian representative on the panel. There were three um I mean editors and subeditors of different newspapers but nobody was representing South Asian viewpoint ... there should have been one

Researcher So there was no ethnic media representative?

Mr B No ethnic, no

Researcher No?

Mr B There was only lady from I think BA group [reference unclear], she was heading the BA group [reference unclear] but ah, nothing, no, should have been more

Researcher Yes, I'm hoping that my thesis will get people thinking about this issue because it's important

- Mrs K Yeah
- Mrs N Fingers crossed
- Researcher** Yeah, ok, so how about politically? Do you feel that South Asians are engaged *politically* through the mainstream media?
- Mrs I What?
- Researcher** Politically engaged? Do you feel that the mainstream media are really drawing in the South Asian community?
- Mrs N More needs to be done
- Mrs I [laughs]
- Mr B I have seen some changes over the last six years. This is my second election I am watching so ... lot of difference
- Researcher** Yeah, and do you....?
- Mr B People are more conscious, they are more proactive now
- Researcher** And do you think the changes are because the candidates are becoming more ethnically diverse?
- Mr B Yeah
- Researcher** And the ... a lot of the...
- Mrs K Issues are very, very important, not only the candidates
- Researcher** Yeah, do you feel, have a feeling that, this election, the parties are trying to draw in the ethnic vote?
- Mrs K Oh, yes,
- Mrs I Yeah, very high
- Mr B Oh, yes, very much, yes
- Mrs N Oh, yes
- Researcher** Oh, all parties, the main parties are really trying to draw in the ethnic vote? Ok, question number 29, do you identify more with political candidates who advertise in South Asian media? Like on radio Tarana or ...or in Kuk Samachar?
- Mrs K Ah, not ...
- Researcher** Do you, do you sort of connect more with those candidates, or not really?

- Mr B When some candidate is speaking, I look around, only then
- Researcher** Ok, so it's nothing to do with whether they advertise?
- Mr B Not much, not much, it's not that like who's coming on the air or who's coming on TV
- Researcher** So it's nothing to do with whether they're in South Asian media?
- Mr B That's my view, that's my view
- Researcher** How about you, [Mrs I], do you, if you listen to Radio Tarana and you hear South Asian candidates, for example, do you connect more with, with them?
- [Interpreter translates]
- Mrs I No, no
- Researcher** So, nothing to do with how they...?
- Mrs R [interrupts] Can you tell her?
- Mrs I You are more interesting[ed] when you don't have the same person in the newspaper
- Mrs N But for me, I'm serious, I think ethnic media, it plays a role if people are there on the radio, I listen to them and I get attracted and I will explore more after listening to them
- Researcher** Ok
- Mrs K And also if there are picking more varied topics or concerns ...
- Researcher** So if you hear John Key or Helen Clark on Radio Tarana, you connect with them more than on the mainstream media?
- Mrs K Yes
- Mrs I No
- Researcher** [Mrs I] No?
- Mrs N And I have seen the woman like me, some of them my friends, you can say, they do the same
- Researcher** Because they are on that ... in that media?
- Mrs N Maybe this is due to ... I don't know...
- Researcher** Even though they are speaking in English, it's the actual forum?
- Mrs N It's not only listening to the radio, it's reading *Kuk* as well ... If more things come about them in *Kuk*, I would be attracted more

- Researcher** Ok, just thinking about...I'm just going to add another question in here just out of interest, and especially because you [the editor, identity withheld] are here, do you think that your newspaper will have an impact on voter turnout, um, in this election?
- Mrs K Yes
- Researcher** And you think Radio Tarana the same?
- Mrs K Yeah, ethnic media this time I think it will, always I think it will
- Researcher** Oh, did I ask you that question [in the survey I sent you]?
- Mrs K Yes, because then, your list
- Researcher** Yes, I think in this election, in particular, the ethnic media may have an effect on voter turnout
- Mrs K Oh, definitely
- Researcher** Among migrants ... do you think that will be the case?
- Mr L 100%
- Mrs N A great influence
- Researcher** Ok, well thankyou very much for your participation
- Mrs N Thank you Kirsten
- Researcher** That was a ... quite lively discussion, um, so, yeah, I'd really like to thank you all, and thankyou, [Mr B] for coming and joining in at the end,
- Mr B My pleasure
- Researcher** Sorry to go over time, I'll just stop recording now

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